<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>TACKLING THE ESSAY ITSELF: PLANNING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>AFTER THE PLAN - THE WRITING: FIRST STAGES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>RELEVANCE: WHAT IS IT?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>WRITING STYLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>COHESION AND LOGIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>THE MAIN BODY: HOW TO STRUCTURE THE ESSAY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.9.1</td>
<td>Persuading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.9.2</td>
<td>Arguing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.9.3</td>
<td>Simple explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.9.4</td>
<td>More subtle explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.10</td>
<td>CONCLUSIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.11</td>
<td>GENERAL WORD-PROCESSING TIPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>EXTENDED ESSAYS/DISSERTATIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>LANGUAGE LEARNING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>THE ADVANCED LITERARY COMMENTARY (ORIGINAL LANGUAGE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>CONTENT &amp; APPROACH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>DETAILED COMMENTARY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>PLAYING THE EXAMINATIONS GAME – TO WIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>REVISION TIMETABLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>PREPARING THE TIME ALLOCATION WITHIN THE EXAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>GENERAL REVISION HINTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.3.1</td>
<td>While revising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.3.2</td>
<td>The night before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.3.3</td>
<td>Just before the exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>AT YOUR EXAMINATION DESK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.4.1</td>
<td>Once the exam starts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.4.2</td>
<td>Some ideas for essay plan formats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.4.3</td>
<td>General hints on exam essay structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.4.4</td>
<td>What to do if time is running out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.4.5</td>
<td>Advice for language papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.4.6</td>
<td>At the end of writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>AFTER THE EXAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>SOME FINAL REMARKS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>MARKING CRITERIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>COURSEWORK ESSAYS AND DISSERTATIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>LANGUAGE-BASED EXERCISES AND EXAMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>WRITTEN EXAMS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Classics Department Study Guide

1 Information Retrieval

This section gives brief advice on how and where to look for information. Your tutors will also be able to give more specific directions to databases and specialist collections. Please read through their bibliographies and course handouts carefully for directions BEFORE asking them in person: the answers to the most commonly asked questions are probably there.

1.1 Buying books

Tutors try not to require you to buy too many books, but some are essential. These will be indicated to you. As a general rule, concentrate on buying the often-used texts/translations, rather than secondary scholarship (critical works). Any others you choose to buy depend on your interest and budget! Most books may be bought online. Here are some good bookshops for classical titles:

- The Hellenic Book Service, 89 Fortress Road, London NW5 (new and secondhand; see www.hellenicbookservice.com)
- Skoob, in Brunswick Square, London (next to Waitrose; secondhand)
- Blackwell’s, Broad Street, Oxford (large range of new and small selection of secondhand)

TOP TIP:
- Why not ask around within the department or advertise on the noticeboard if you are looking for coursebooks secondhand, or have some to sell? You can often pick up bargains easily.

1.2 Which translation to use?

Although you may not think it, it can matter greatly what translation you use. Some are designed more to give a flavour of the original, or for stage productions, and so are less accurate for our use. Tutors will suggest good translations to use: do follow their advice. If you have a translation and are unsure whether it is a good one for your course, just ask your tutor.

1.3 Libraries

The books you will need for undergraduate courses will be in our college library or available online (for online resources, see sections 2.7.6 and 4.3), but if you are researching a special subject dissertation, for example, you will be expected to use a wider range of libraries. If you are often in London, then the Institute of Classical Studies library (see below) is a good place to use.

1.3.1 The College library

The library staff have guides to using the library and are easily accessible if you have any queries. Don’t get anxious if you feel lost to start with – we all do! It takes time to learn how to get around the library, but it is an essential part of study here. Some tutors will even arrange tours of relevant parts of the classics collections.

The Classics Department has a librarian who is a special liaison with us, and will meet you during induction week and give you more up-to-date advice. This librarian is also the person to e-mail if you have found any classics books missing without trace! The relevant contact details will be announced in the departmental literature.

- Get used to using the computer catalogues: it is not hard to learn. If you get confused, ask the library staff for help.
- All departmental bibliographies give you the shelf-marks of the books (that is the number that helps you to locate the shelf in the library where the book lives).
- Some books and articles that are used often are kept in the Restricted Loan Collection which ought to mean that you can consult them more easily. This will be indicated on the library computer catalogue.
• If you find a book you need is out on loan, don’t be afraid to recall it! Often it is just sitting on someone’s desk, unused!
• Similarly, PLEASE return books AS SOON AS YOU HAVE FINISHED WITH THEM. You will soon find out how frustrating it is when others don’t!
• Do not write or mark any library book, even if you find it already written in. This is very disrespectful and ruins the book for others. It may also be impossible to replace it with a new one.

1.3.2 Institute of Classical Studies Library

This is located in Senate House in London. It has a fantastic amount of material and is a great place to work if you are in London (e.g. for a taught course).

1.4 Text collections

There are several series of texts that you will see in the college library, where different authors are all grouped together by series rather than spread out over the whole literature range alphabetically. So, if you want the Loeb Menander, look for the Loeb series first, then within that, look alphabetically for Menander. You’ll soon get the hang of it!

If you are studying texts in the original language, you may be asked to buy a specific text. Please follow the tutor’s advice as texts often differ greatly in line numberings, readings, deletions etc.

• The Loeb series are small hardbacks, green for Greek authors, red for Latin. They have original text and English translation on facing pages. It is an old series, so some translations are more useful for us today than others. Your tutors will recommend good ones and discourage you from bad ones! As a rule the more recent the Loeb, the better.
• Teubner series: these come in a variety of formats, older ones are small brown books, newer ones are orange for Greek authors and blue for Latin. These only have original texts.
• Oxford Classical Texts (OCTs). These contain text only and are blue hardbacks (older ones were brown).
• The Budé series. These are like Loeb’s, except with facing French translations. Yellow for Greek authors, orange for Latin.
• The Aris & Phillips series. These have white covers and feature special editions of individual works or selections. They are modern and contain an introduction, bibliography, text, facing translation, and brief commentary. These are often the set texts for language courses, along with...
• The Cambridge Greek and Latin classics series, in two-tone green. These are for more advanced students than the Aris & Phillips series and do not include translations.

1.5 Collections of ancient texts

Your tutors will draw your attention to special collections of ancient evidence in your own subject. However, here are a few commonly referred to:

• For inscriptions:
  CIL = Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
  IG = Inscriptiones Graecae
  SEG = Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum

• For papyri:
  POxy = Oxyrhynchus Papyri
  (similarly PMich = Michigan Papyri)
• For Greek historiographers:
  Jacoby = F. Jacoby, Fragmente der griechischen Historiker
1.6 Dictionaries & encyclopaedias

1.6.1 Dictionaries

If you are studying original language you may well have bought a dictionary already. Fine. It will more than likely suffice. However, here are the recommended ones:

- **Greek**: *Greek-English Lexicon*, by Liddell-Scott-Jones. It comes in several sizes, the Intermediate is usually all you would need to buy for yourself. The larger version can be consulted in the college library.
- **Latin**: *A Latin Dictionary* by Lewis & Short; or *The Oxford Latin Dictionary*. These are very large, expensive, and cumbersome. It is best to consult them in the library. For personal use any intermediate-sized Latin dictionary will normally suffice. (The old Collins Gem is really too small!)
- There are very scientific and scholarly collections of texts available on CD-ROM, including searchable disks of the whole of Greek and Latin. These you would only need for very specialised research in the original language. For up-to-date information, consult the college library staff.

1.6.2 Specialist dictionaries and lexica

Some well-studied authors have dictionaries of their own that will be found in the relevant author section in the library. Some examples are Homer, Pindar, the tragedians, Herodotus, Thucydides, Horace, Livy, Ovid and Vergil. To find out if your author has one, either browse along the library shelves, or consult the catalogue.

1.6.3 Encyclopaedias

The first place to look is *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (4th edition, 2012). This is recent and contains entries on most topics you might encounter. Here is where you can find potted biographies of the literary and historical figures you encounter during your study. It is ALWAYS wise to read these brief entries: it pays off to make a few notes too, especially about when and where they lived, or their key features.

The library also has a selection of older encyclopaedias. These are often very helpful, e.g. the ones on biography or geography by Dr. Smith.

Some more advanced encyclopaedias are written in languages other than English, but may be of help for students for whom English is not their first language. The most famous of these is the massive German *Realencyclopädie*, often called *RE*, or *Pauly-Wissowa* (after its original editors). It has a series of additional supplementary volumes too, so don’t forget to check them too! Even if you don’t know German, you can use it to mine their impressive collections of ancient references.

1.7 Journals

The college library can only accommodate some runs of some classical journals. However the material you need for coursework will be there in one form or another. The library of the Institute of Classical Studies has a far wider specialist selection.

Here are a few commonly-cited abbreviations:

- **AJP**  American Journal of Philology
- **BICS** Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies
- **CPh**  Classical Philology
- **CQ**  Classical Quarterly
- **CR**  Classical Review
- **G&R** Greece and Rome
- **HSCP** Harvard Studies in Classical Philology
- **JHS** Journal of Hellenic Studies
- **JRS** Journal of Roman Studies
- **Mnem** Mnemosyne
- **RhM** Rheinisches Museum
- **TAPA** Transactions of the American Philological Association
2 Teaching and Learning

2.1 Introduction

This section seeks to answer briefly the following questions:

- What teaching and learning methods does the Classics Department use, and why?
- How do tutors give me feedback on my progress?
- How much independent study am I expected to do?
- How is teaching and learning different in university from that in schools?
- How is the British system different from overseas?

2.2 Teaching methods

The Classics Department employs a wide range of teaching and learning methods, many of which will be familiar to you from schools or colleges elsewhere. Broadly speaking we use the following types of ‘contact’ sessions, where you have a tutor present, written coursework, and research exercises, where you have a tutor as supervisor:

- small to medium-sized classes, especially for language acquisition;
- small to medium-sized seminars, designed to develop class interaction, debate and discussion, and both group and individual level, student communication skills, and self-confidence;
- medium-large sized lectures, designed to impart evidence, methods of argument, modern critical approaches and source criticism, and to develop the skills of listening with a purpose;
- student presentations, whose length and style vary according to course, designed to develop transferable oral presentation skills and self-confidence;
- coursework assignments, which develop skills in handling evidence, critically assessing scholarly interpretations, and presenting persuasive arguments;
- extended essays, projects or dissertations which develop valuable transferable research skills involving more primary and secondary evidence than for coursework essays.

In addition we also expect you to work each week in independent guided study. This is where you work on your own, having received prior guidance from your tutor. This independent study time is a CRUCIAL element of your degree study. Your tutors will expect you to complete preparatory work or follow-up work outside timetabled class hours. If you do not do this work, your performance will be severely hindered. The amount of independent study time expected of you is reflected in the course’s credit weighting (see below 2.5).

Independent Guided Study may take a variety of forms, for example:

- Preparatory reading or other work for a seminar
- Researching, planning and practising an in-class presentation
- Preparing visual aids (e.g. PowerPoint slideshow, handout) for an in-class presentation
- Liaising with other class members for a team project
- Researching, planning and writing a coursework assignment
- Participating in a site study visit

2.3 Tutors and Feedback

In order to help your learning, during your degree your tutors will provide you with feedback on your progress through several means:

- Oral feedback in class sessions, guiding your thoughts, challenging or questioning your arguments, and indicating whether these are convincing, and how you could improve.
- Written feedback on written assignments, both those which contribute to your formal assessment.
mark and those which do not (which we call ‘formative’). This is a very important element, which you should read and think about seriously. Your tutors will offer constructive guidance on how to improve, and also point out what you are doing well. The feedback on your written work is thus MUCH more than simply the mark at the bottom of the cover sheet! If you wish to discuss your performance in more detail, make an appointment with your course tutor.

- **Oral feedback in class on written assignments/exercises.** Tutors may well use part of a class to discuss the class’ recent assignments, e.g. essays or language exercises/tests, showing where mistakes may have been made, and offering practical suggestions for improvement.
- **One-to-one consultations,** perhaps to discuss how to improve your writing style, or to discuss your project or dissertation research progress.
- **Written feedback on the examination performance** of the class as a whole, with practical constructive comments on strengths and weaknesses. This is usually available in the following autumn term on the special Moodle page for examination feedback.
- **In-class tests.** These may not necessarily contribute to your formal assessment mark, but will act as informal indicators of your progress, highlighting areas for improvement.

Your tutors are always very keen to help you and to offer you feedback. If you are ever unsure about how you are progressing on a course, please do not be afraid to ask them how you are doing, and how you could improve.

### 2.4 University teaching and learning

University teaching and learning is, however, different from that in schools in the greater emphasis we place upon your **independent study**. While we actively support teamwork in some areas, the majority of your degree study is your own personal responsibility. Tutors offer as much guidance and support as they can, but, in the end, the amount of effort which you yourself put into the courses directly influences your performance.

### 2.5 The Credit Weighting Scheme & Independent Guided Study Time

Royal Holloway uses the internationally recognised Credit Weighting Scheme for its courses, to reflect the notional study hours required for each course, with one credit equivalent to ten study hours. A whole unit is weighted at 30 credits, and a half-unit at 15 credits.

The credit given to a course also helps you to calculate the number of independent guided study hours that you should aim to complete for each week of teaching (although some of this study will be spread out over the year, e.g. as background reading during the vacations, exam revision, etc).

For example:

- **For a whole unit = 30 credits = 300 study hours, taught over 20 weeks, with two hours per week in-class contact time,** the total contact hours will be 40. That means you have 260 hours for independent guided study. That results in 13 hours for each week of teaching.
- **For a whole unit = 30 credits = 300 study hours, taught over 20 weeks, with three hours per week in-class contact time,** the independent study time for each week of teaching is 12 hours.
- **For a half-unit = 15 credits = 150 study hours, taught over 10 weeks, with two hours per week in-class contact time,** the independent study time for each week of teaching is 13 hours.

### 2.6 The British system used in Royal Holloway

The British system used in Royal Holloway, unlike some overseas educational systems, is still based strongly on written assessment, usually a mixture of coursework essays or projects and unseen written examinations. Hence much of this booklet concerns advice about written study methods. If you are an overseas student who feels that you need extra support or training in this area, please talk to your Personal Adviser, who can direct you to the numerous College student study support mechanisms available, which include the Centre for the Development of Academic Skills (CeDAS; see below).
2.7 Centre for the Development of Academic Skills (CeDAS)

CeDAS Academic Skills Programme

CeDAS (the Centre for the Development of Academic Skills) offers a range of courses, workshops and 1-to-1 tutorials that aim to ensure all students at Royal Holloway reach their full academic potential. Here is an outline of their services.

2.7.1 Academic Skills for All

CeDAS runs a number of interactive workshops in the Autumn and Spring terms that are open to all students. These workshops give you a sound introduction to many of the key skills you need to perform well in your university studies. You can develop skills for most aspects of academic writing as well as for seminars, presentations and groupwork. If you attend these workshops, you can earn Royal Holloway Passport points.

2.7.2 Academic English for International Students

CeDAS offers a suite of courses specifically designed for international students (including EU students) whose first language is not English. By attending these courses you can pick up the skills and language you need to communicate successfully in your academic studies. Courses run in the Autumn and Spring terms and comprise either 4 weekly classes, or, for our longer courses, 8 weekly classes. If you attend these courses, you can earn Royal Holloway Passport points.

2.7.3 Academic Skills for your subject

CeDAS also run workshops that are embedded into the curriculum of academic programmes. These have proven to be highly effective because the skills you learn are closely connected to particular academic tasks - especially writing tasks - within a specific discipline. Further details about this provision are to be found in the course information of participating departments.

2.7.4 1-to-1 Writing Tutorials

CeDAS offers all taught students the opportunity to gain help and advice on their academic writing. You can book up to three 30-minute tutorials per term with a specialist tutor who can provide input on many elements of your academic writing.

Please note: 1-to-1 Writing Tutorials are developmental. It is an opportunity for you to clarify the way you express ideas through face-to-face discussion with a reader. Your tutor will not proof-read your work.

2.7.5 Maths and Statistics Support

CeDAS also offers 1-1 Maths and Statistics Support sessions for undergraduate and post-graduate (taught) students in selected subjects. The aim of these sessions will be to develop your confidence and skills, and ultimately to help you solve mathematical problems independently. The 1-to-1 sessions will be available to book in advance.

2.7.6 Online Resources

There are several online resources to support students' academic skills development and language learning. Here are some subscription resources available to Royal Holloway students.

Skills4Study Campus is an interactive e-learning resource that helps you understand, practise and improve
core skills needed for successful study: writing, critical thinking, reading and note-making, referencing and understanding plagiarism, and exam techniques.

**EAP Toolkit** offers a set of 100 learning activities (75+ hours of study) which provides an introduction to a wide range of academic study skills for international students.

**Tips and Techniques for Exam Success** provides a collection of resources that will help you meet the challenges of summer term exams at Royal Holloway.

---

Further information - CeDAS is based in the International Building, ground floor. To access CeDAS resources or to book a workshop, course, or tutorial, simply go to: [www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/cedas](http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/cedas)

---

3 The Study Environment & Managing Study Time

When it comes to where to study, you normally have a choice between

a) your room
or b) the library.

Make sure that

- you have a comfortable chair with back support to sit on
- your desk is in a well-lit position
- if you have a computer, that it is not reflecting back glare from the screen and that the screen is not too close to your eyes when you sit at your desk
- you have some way of letting visitors know that you are not to be disturbed
- you have set your mobile phone to silent, or turn it off
- that if you prefer to listen to music while working that it is not going to disturb your neighbours

3.1 Studying in the library

Many people find comfort in not working alone, so if you work in the library, make sure that

- you are really studying and not just socialising! Should you really sit surrounded by friends?
- you focus your work realistically, and do not fall into the temptation of collecting all the books on your subject on your desk, thus depriving others of them, when you really can only work on one or two at a time.
- you don’t get put off seeing others writing away furiously while you sit thinking or reading: they may have totally different projects to do and work in quite different ways. Remember, time taken in careful thinking and planning is always rewarded.
- you always return books once you have finished with them.

3.2 Managing your study time

This is a large subject on which many have written whole books! Here are some suggested study skills guides:

* P. Shah *Successful Study: The Essential Skills*, Letts 1998
* J. Germov *Get Great Marks for your Essays*, Allen & Unwin 1996
... and, in general, anything in the excellent study skills series published by Palgrave. The College has a good interactive version of a couple of titles from this series on Moodle, which will give you immediate, hands-on practice and feedback in the skills covered by this booklet. You’ll find it on the Moodle front page, in the second box down on the left, as ”skills4studycampus”. Do it all (about 8 hours total, so comfortably doable over a weekend). Why not start right now?

To get the best out of university study you must **CONTROL time**. This is not to say that you will be made to study every hour! Far from it. The university experience is much more than just your degree work.

Most of you will have had timetables at school that regulated time for you. Now you have fewer contact hours in classes, there is a great temptation to squander hours outside class. You must try to strike a **BALANCE** between work and leisure time. This is going to vary according to every one of you. But here are some general tips:

**TOP TIPS**

- Draw up a timetable that includes ALL SEVEN days, and evenings. Sometimes you may need to work at weekends.
- First fill in all the class hours that are compulsory.
- If you are living away from campus, add in travel time beforehand and shade it all out. The same applies if you are taking courses in central London.
- If you have to work part-time, put in the hours you cannot alter.
- Next put in your important leisure activities, whether they be sports or times you meet friends, or go clubbing (also allowing *realistically* for ‘recovery time’ the next morning!).
- By this stage you now have a fairly clear idea of what ‘spare’ time you have. Now you need to plan in study time.
- Look for the class hours that are seminars, which require work in advance. Allow yourself a couple of hours a week per course. Add them in where you think it makes sense.
- Now, even more tricky, you need to allow for time to be spent on essays. Even though these may not be due every week, it is a good idea to set aside hours for essay work each week anyway, to get into the habit. Again a couple of hours per course per week is a good idea.
- Don’t make these study hours too long for yourself. Most people can realistically only work for about an hour or an hour and a half before needing a break. Timetable in breaks too, at least 15 up to 30 mins.
- Are you a morning, afternoon, or evening person? You will know yourself when you work most productively. Bear this in mind when putting in your study hours.
- If you like studying in the library, bear in mind too their opening hours.
- Hopefully now you will see the combination of compulsory class and leisure hours, with a mixture of private study hours. There should be plenty left for you to enjoy yourself!
- Finally, do remember that your parents are right (!): get a good amount of sleep each week, and do eat properly! Strange to say it, but study takes a lot of energy out of you.
- If you do have any problems arranging your weekly programme, talk it over with your Personal Tutor, the sooner the better. They will be only too glad to help.
How to read for what you want in a book/journal article

It is your first ever university essay. You’ve consulted the bibliography and have in front of you a recommended book. Where do you begin??

TOP TIPS:

- Tutors may often refer you to specific pages, but don’t just stop there. Take a couple of minutes to glance over the Contents page. You may find it may help you with another essay later. If so, make a note of it.
- If you have not been given specific pages by your tutor, try the following:
  - look at the Contents page. The word, person or idea may be there, or it may have a chapter that looks on the right sort of area.
  - look at the Indices (plural of Index). Many books have more than one index, e.g. one for proper names of people/places, another for subjects, another for ancient sources. Be flexible too. For example, if you are looking for references to women, don’t just try ‘women’, also look for related words, such as ‘gender’, ‘marriage’, ‘divorce’, ‘children’.
  - as you read your selected pages, use any footnote cross-references. They may offer interesting nuggets of gold for an essay!

4.1 Some common abbreviations:

art. cit. the article already cited
op. cit. the work already cited
id. the author already cited
ibid. the passage/work already cited
t.t. technical term
f(f). and following (lines/pages)
Alii others (often to shorten a list of editors in a bibliography)
cf. compare
s.v. look under the entry... (used in dictionaries)
i.e. that is, namely
e.g. for example
tsic yes, it does say that! (to show surprise/irony)

4.2 Skim reading for something specific

Often you will find an article or chapter that is supposed to help you prepare for a class or essay. You could sit and read it all through slowly. However sometimes it may be more economical to “skim read” it first to see if it is worth reading more closely. How do you do this?

TOP TIPS:

- Read the introductory paragraph (or two) carefully. Here an author will state what the following pages will be about.
- Read by paragraph: look at each opening sentence to see whether the rest of the paragraph might be of help. Each new paragraph usually means a new step in the argument, or a new piece of evidence.
- Don’t just look for one key word from your essay title. Look for related words and words with similar meanings. If you are looking for material on slaves, don’t just look for ‘slave’, also look out for e.g. ‘free’, ‘unfree’, ‘status’, ‘manumission’ (= freeing slaves), “master”, ‘bondage’ etc.
- Don’t forget to skim read the notes too!
- When you see your target, zoom in on that paragraph and read it carefully. Also look back and forward a paragraph to see where that fact has come from.
- Finally, read the concluding paragraph carefully. It should summarise the writer’s argument, and may point to something you missed.
4.3 Using online resources

Be as critical as you would in a library, only more so. Most of what’s out there is rubbish; don’t just type “Aphrodite” into Google (you’ll just get a load of porn sites and new-age stuff). Use specialist classical gateways (Michigan, Oxford, Reading) and resources (BMCR, Perseus, Diotima, Stoa, TOCS-IN), and get to know the good classics Departmental sites like Temple and the Open University. The golden rule is that online sources are only of value as a way of locating information in printed sources. (The only significant exception is online academic journals and conference proceedings.)

TOP TIPS:

- Always check the site’s credentials. Ask who the site’s aimed at: GCSE students, A level, undergraduates, amateurs, fringe loonies? You may need to check other pages from the site to find the answers to some of these questions. As a rule of thumb, **anything reliable will be hosted at a university address** (.edu, .ac.uk, etc.).
- Avoid: online student essays (most are awful beyond words), GCSE or A-level revision sites (too elementary), amateur sites (there are a lot of nutters out there), and **anything unsigned** (if no author is credited, be very, very cautious about the content). **This includes Wikipedia**, which should **NEVER** be cited as a scholarly authority, or indeed at all; it has academic value only as a clearing-house of references and links to more reliable sources, for example online translations of ancient texts, (and in that respect can be quite useful).
- Always make a note not just of the URL but of author, page title, and real-world institutional location (University of Chiswick, or wherever). You’ll need all these for the bibliography.
- Never, ever, ever paste online text into essays, even accidentally, without quotation marks and full reference. It’s the easiest kind of plagiarism to detect – that’s why we have the Turnitin system – and the College penalties are absolutely merciless.

5 Taking Notes from Reading

5.1 What kind of notes are they?

- Notes for e.g. a specific essay will be different from more general ones you use to get into a new subject.
- When and how am I likely to use them again? Most notes will be consulted again long after they were initially written, e.g. for exam revision. So...
- How can I make sure that I can understand them again in some months’ time?
- Am I making sure that I note clearly where I get my information from?
- Have I got a good filing system so I can find them again easily?

Let’s take these one by one.

5.2 What are the notes for?

- If you are taking notes for a specific title, write that title clearly at the top of the first page. This helps in two ways:
  - you can always look back to check that what you are writing actually answers the question.
  - you can find the notes easily again later amongst a year’s worth of notes!
- If your notes are more general, to help you understand a topic, make sure that you have clear sub-headings to help you find your way through them again later.

TOP TIP:

- Have a separate page for different subjects. You can then write down information drawn from different sources on specific subjects together. This helps you to see connections and is an excellent way to organise material for exam revision later. But if you do this, make sure that you also note down WHERE you found the information (see 5.5 below).
5.3 Using notes again

Exam revision is the most obvious time when you will need your notes again, but you might also need them for seminar discussion or for comparisons/contrasts in later essays. As you write your notes, ask yourself "could I understand them in two weeks’ time?"

5.4 Making your notes easily re-usable

Here clear labelling of topics and use of understandable sub-headings can help. Remember: the notes are for you, so don’t be embarrassed to do whatever you find best to make them easy to use.

**TOP TIPS:**

- Use colours or diagrams to highlight important sections.
- Maybe notes in the margin about funny or strange things that happened to you when writing the notes will help you remember them later.

5.5 Noting sources

THIS IS ESSENTIAL. One of the most important aspects of university study is its requirement to develop critical awareness of where we get our information, its reliability or bias, and scholars' views.

**TOP TIPS:**

- State quite clearly in what book or article and on what page you found the information. Put the bibliog. data (sometimes this need only be the author’s name for shorthand, as you can note all the data elsewhere in a bibliography), then put page numbers in the margin.
- If you copy anything word for word, MARK IT AS SUCH. This way you know to put it in quotation marks in an essay. Maybe use a different colour of pen for direct quotations.

5.6 Storing notes

It is so easy to fill your files (or computer folders) with miscellaneous papers/documents, crammed in, all full of writing and handouts. BUT THINK. What is more frightening or depressing than going to revise and being faced with large numbers of papers/documents at random: where on earth do you start? Often you don’t start at all, but shrink back and put off the dreaded day. Such panic is so easy to avoid by planning just a little at the start.

Remember: you want to be able to use your own notes as easily as you would a book, or better!

**TOP TIPS:**

- If you prefer to write your notes on paper, invest in separate files for separate courses. This sounds common sense, but you’d be surprised how many don’t think of it until it is too late. You can then put away each course’s notes and handouts and easily find them for later consultation. Choose different colours too: a row of all-black folders is bound to be confusing in a hurry to get to class! (On the choice of colours, see below.)
- If you keep your notes on a computer, make sure to organise them into easily recognisable folders.
- File your papers or computer documents at the end of each teaching session, or at least the end of each day. Otherwise you know that that pile on your desktop gets bigger and bigger and papers get so easily lost and confused!
- If your course has clear topic divisions, use file dividers or computer sub-folders and label them clearly as you start each new topic. Again, common sense, but really useful.
- Use again any ideas that worked well for you at school. Maybe some colours have connections for you: if you had yellow notebooks for literature at school, choose a yellow file for literature notes here. Colours are immediately recognisable and linger long in your subconscious. If you’re in a hurry for a class and grab the wrong file...so go for what you instinctively connect together.
- Think about what folders you take to class. Are you one of those people who carries heavy files around...
all day when really all you need is a few pages?? How would you feel if you accidentally left your bulging file in a lecture-room and lost it?? Take time, either the night before, or before the class, to choose the relevant papers to take from your room to the lecture/class.

- And, finally, for all computer users; **BACK UP YOUR DATA!** It is easy to back up documents, whether using a Cloud system, or a portable hard disc. You can also easily set up the systems so that they do this automatically at regular intervals.

6 Taking Lecture Notes

It is important to realise that taking notes in a lecture is quite a different procedure from writing notes when reading by yourself. Nevertheless the end-product is still one you have to be able to understand later and re-use. Therefore many of the tips above can be used here too. Here are a few others:

**TOP TIPS:**

- If you take notes on a laptop or tablet, make sure in advance that you have enough battery charge!
- If you take notes on paper, have plenty of paper and pens with you! Common sense, but you know how often your friends are asking you for them!
- Use coloured pens or coloured computer fonts for different types of evidence?
- Use the handout layout as a guide: if it has section or line numbers, you can repeat them in your margin to help relate what you write to the handout text and avoid wasting time.
- Don't waste time copying out titles etc. unless you need to. If you can use abbreviations etc., do so. But...
- Make sure your abbreviations can be understood in several months' time!! If in doubt, scribble what the abbreviations mean at the top of that lecture's notes, or handout, or at the start of that section in your file: maybe you could put your abbreviations on the file dividers??
- Don't copy down all the lecturer says! Try to develop discrimination between what is important and what is not. Often lecturers make this easier by putting essential data on the handout, or even by saying things like "and this is important", "what is remarkable here is...", "we should note..." etc.
- Annotate handouts where you can do so and still make it legible for later. This saves a lot of time.
- Copy diagrams or drawings, however badly!, as long as they help get a point across. Here colours can be really useful too. However many images and diagrams may well be reproduced on the handout, or available separately on the course Moodle page.
- Ask the lecturer if you miss something you think is important, or need a word's spelling written up on the board. You won’t be the only one, and lecturers do not mind being stopped by an interested student.
- Ask questions at the end if something in the argument is not clear to you. Better to ask when it is fresh in everyone's minds than weeks later.

7 Seminars

7.1 Preparation before the seminar

**All seminars require work in advance.** You will not benefit from the learning experience if you don't do the work. Those who do always perform better in essays, presentations and exams. Those who don't stand out clearly in class and often don't get much respect from fellow students who did do the work.
TOP TIPS:

- Check the tutor’s handouts to make sure you know exactly what is required. If it is not clear to you, please check with your tutor. They will be only too happy to explain more clearly and to give advice. You can also, of course, check with fellow students.
- “How much reading should I do for a class?” This varies according to the level of the class and the subject. Your tutor should give you an idea of the minimum required, that is what you MUST read, but do try to read more than this, especially if the subject interests you, or if you feel that it would help your general understanding of a course that is new to you, or if it might help in a later coursework essay. However, don’t try to cover everything on a bibliography: the tutor usually gives plenty of titles as extra reading to allow you to develop your own specialist interests and to offer alternatives if books are out of the library on loan.
- Make notes. Reading is fine, but you’ll have forgotten it all a day later. Notes help give you confidence to speak in class and allow you to add to your own reading from class discussion, rather than it all being new. Sometimes class discussion can be greatly helped when students are comparing one another’s notes and ideas.

7.2 What to do in a seminar

The seminar is an active, contributing experience. It is not a mini-lecture by the tutor. You will enjoy it better (and the time will go more quickly!!), if you involve yourself actively.

TOP TIPS:

- Do try to speak at least once per class. If you are naturally shy, this helps give you confidence. It also shows your tutor that you are thinking and taking part, rather than passively sitting silently taking notes. Tutors may need to write reports on your class contributions and find it very hard to say much that is positive when some students refuse to speak.
- Don’t hog the debate. The other extreme is the student who answers every question as if it was directed to them alone. Tutors hate this because it stops discussion, students hate anyone who dominates, and the dominant student soon earns a poor reputation. By all means show interest, but, if you feel you are prone to take centre-stage, please hold back a little to let your colleagues have their say too. Everyone will then respect you far more and your own learning experience will be much better.
- Ask questions, and not just of your tutor. Ask your colleagues questions too: what did they mean by their last remark? Do you detect a flaw in the argument: point it out politely. Debate and discussion are fun and once you try it, you will find that you remember the material FAR better for revision.

8 In-Class Presentations

The exact nature of the presentation will vary according to the tutor and course. They will make clear to you what is expected. If you are at all unclear, please consult them as soon as you can to avoid wasted or wrong effort. The following are general guidelines.

Ask yourself:

- what is the aim of the presentation? This could be any of three aims, identified long ago by Aristotle, Cicero and other classical theorists of oratory:
  - to inform: is your presentation designed to tell your audience facts and examples they didn’t know beforehand?
  - to persuade: are you to offer a case for or against a proposition?
  - to please: is your presentation to illustrate a particular style or to entertain?
- who are your audience? Are they students who know the topic well in general and who only need to know more, or are they unfamiliar with the subject? How much background knowledge can you assume, and how much will you need to supply?
TOP TIPS:

- A spoken presentation needs to win and retain audience interest. The difficulty here is increased with the length of the presentation. It is easier to keep an audience listening for ten minutes than thirty. If your presentation is lengthy, maybe you could try to copy what your teachers and lecturers do, such as
- varying the presentation by use of visual aids, questions to the audience, brief audience buzz-group discussions that are then picked up and used by the speaker
- recapping important points covered before moving on to new ones
- Even more so than an essay a presentation ought to be clearly signposted, so the listener knows where they are and what is to come. You could do this by saying e.g. “and here is the second of my three points”. You can plan this beforehand and make sure that each transition to a new subject is clear.
- Handouts are very helpful in several ways:
  - they save time in giving references, texts, reading lists, that you will not need to read out
  - they show clearly to a listener the structure of a presentation
  - they allow you to use e.g. pictures or diagrams that the audience can keep and refer back to later
  - they show that you are developing the important skills involved in oral presentation.
- Try not to write out a mini-essay and then just read it out word for word. Imagine how dry this would seem to you if you were listening to it. What works better are some of the following:
  - speak from record cards or sheets that you use as reference. These can have key words and ideas on them, material such as dates or texts, cross-references to your handout or visual aids.
  - look up and keep eye-contact with your audience, and smile occasionally! A good presentation mixes the formal and informal
  - maybe speak from your handout and develop the ideas there more naturally.
- Never go over your time limit.
- Don’t try to cram in too much material.

Don’t rely too much on your PowerPoint slideshow. Remember that it is there to help you, not to replace you! Remember to keep slides easy to read from a distance, and not too overcrowded with text or images. It is all-too-tempting to use a presentation as a chance to show off all your research. Rushed and crammed presentations do not go down well with listeners. Practice reading the presentation to yourself or a friend; get the timing right. It is far better to be a minute or two short than to overrun. The skill of speaking within a time-limit is very much valued by employers.

Reading out your presentation beforehand to a friend is also helpful in case you need to make something clearer. Better to have a friend tell you beforehand that something is missing or unclear than have it happen in class!

9 Essay Writing

9.1 General Points

The following advice is designed to be applicable generally to most of the essays you would have to write for your degree here. Clearly the length and complexity develop over the years of your degree and course tutors will make clear what special requirements apply in individual courses. Please make sure you check their course literature to make sure you know what is required. If you are still unsure, please see the tutor as soon as you can.

Submission deadlines should be adhered to strictly. Application procedures for extensions are detailed elsewhere in your Student Handbook. You are reminded that extensions are granted at the discretion of the tutor and that merely applying for one will not necessarily mean that you get it.
You should write for someone who is intelligent and reasonably knowledgeable in your subject. You would not, therefore, need to fill in background data that the reader can be expected to know already. For example, in a first-year essay on Greek tragedy, you do not need to say things like "Aeschylus the famous fifth-century Athenian playwright" when just "Aeschylus" will suffice. However you might need to supply important dates or more detailed information that is more specific to the set essay subject. But don’t worry: this is a skill achieved with experience. As you journey through the department, your tutors will show you what to include and what to omit.

Don’t be afraid to argue or disagree with scholars: on the contrary, this is to be encouraged! Just because Professor X says something in an imposingly learned article, does not mean to say that she is automatically right and you, if you disagree, are wrong. Put your case – engage actively with scholars!

To sum up, examiners are looking for the following in an essay or dissertation:

• originality of thought
• critical evaluation of primary source material
• the ability to sustain a relevant and focused argument
• clarity of presentation
• understanding of the issues
• skills of analysis and synthesis (putting ideas together)

Now, to the nitty-gritty...

9.2 What to do when given an essay title

Essay titles embrace a multitude of possible formats. The exercise is not just "write all you know about X". Most titles require ANALYSIS of some kind. Very rarely will you just be able to sit straight down and write. You will need to do some research first. So you will want to ask yourself and write down a list to help you organise your work:

• what do I need to read/do before I can start answering the question?
• what books/articles are marked as essential reading for this project?
• does any of the extra reading look interesting, so I can adopt a particular focus or stance?
• where do I go to find them? Do I own them, or am I to use the library?
• what have I read/studied already that may be of help? Can I find my seminar/lecture notes that will help?

9.3 How to ‘decode’ the essay title

Some titles use ‘examiner’s code-words’ that imply a certain approach. You will see the ones common in your subject area by looking at past examination papers and coursework essay titles. Here are a few samples:

• ‘examine’, ‘analyse’, ‘discuss’: do NOT just tell the reader all you know. These may require careful discussion of problems the sources may raise, an account of how things change over time, an argument for or against a position.
• ‘compare and contrast’: this means you must talk equally about both areas under discussion, not just 80% on one and 20% the other! Look for issues that they share and perhaps treat differently or in similar ways. Give the essay a balance by moving from point to point with examples of each approach.
• ‘variety’: this means you talk about more than one aspect! Usually it is three or four in an average coursework essay.
• ‘change’, ‘development’: this means you look at the same topic over time. So be sure to get your chronology right. It is often best too to follow chronological order and follow development, rather than to jump back and forth over time periods.

9.4 Tackling the essay itself: Planning

Time spent in planning is seldom wasted. A reader can tell almost once if an essay shows good features of planning. You should consider the following questions first:

• what stance am I going to take? Am I going to agree or disagree?
• what material shall I include?
• what material shall I leave out?
Then you draw up your ESSAY PLAN. The plan is crucial to gaining a good grasp of your material. You want to be in control of it, rather than struggling with a mass of evidence. The plan itself can take a variety of formats: choose what you like best. Possible formats could be:

- a list of features, which you can then prioritise with numbers and/or arrows
- a ‘spider diagram’ with the question topic at the centre and lines coming out from it for each sub-division.

**TOP TIPS:**

- In any format, don’t forget how helpful colours can be to group common or contrasting ideas at the plan stage.
- Try to stick to one side of A4 paper. It is easier to grasp a plan if it sits neatly on one page. Anyway, if the plan grows larger than that, you are almost certainly including irrelevant material.
- When drawing up a plan, it may be helpful to lay out your notes on a large table, so you can see different aspects at a glance. Maybe even move the papers around on the table into an order you think is helpful.
- Don’t try to include all your research. BE SELECTIVE. A good mark can be achieved just as much by leaving out unnecessary material as by leaving material in.
- FOCUS your plan. Go back to those questions at the start of this section 8.4.
- Try to find examples for each point you raise. Tying theory down to particulars (e.g. texts, episodes in plays, or artefacts) always works well. But don’t overdo it: usually one or two examples is enough. Be specific here with references where possible, e.g. line numbers of a text or inscription number.

9.5 After the plan – the writing: first stages

Now you know what you want to say in the body of your essay. You need to introduce it briefly. Introductions are often frightening to write: that blank screen is very intimidating! But you know what you want to say: so summarise briefly the main points. A good introduction might contain some or all of the following:

- an interpretation of the title: are you going to take a technical term or idea and refine it? are you going to select a particular text/artefact(s) as an example, or focus on a specific time period?
- does the title raise issues about the value of our evidence and sources? are they flawed in any way? bias? incomplete?
- what relevant areas are you aware of but cannot discuss because of space?
- a clear statement of what your stance is going to be and how the essay will develop.

**TOP TIP:**

- Reading an essay is like going on a journey. You appreciate it more at once if it is well sign-posted. So tell the reader where you start from, where they will visit en route, and where they will finally reach.
- Don’t be afraid to make your structure clear. So you can group subjects in a way like: “There are three factors that influenced the Athenian treatment of women. The first of these is…. Secondly…..Thirdly, and finally…”
- Structure is a sign that you are in control.

9.6 Relevance: what is it?

Tutors will often mark you up or down according to how relevantly you answer the question. This means simply whether you stick to the set question or not, whether you digress off the subject. Here FOCUS is very important.

**TOP TIPS:**

- As you prepare to write each sentence, think: “How does this answer the set question?” If it does not, is it really necessary? You may be really proud of having found that fact, but if it is not relevant, it may drag you down.
- Be stern with yourself. As said above, BE SELECTIVE. Deciding to leave out irrelevant material may be very worthwhile.
9.7 Writing Style

In general, however, remember that this whole process is supposed to produce a graduate capable of clear expression in written English. If tutors seem to be hot on your spelling errors, it is not because they are mean-minded, but they are trying to improve your expression so you can move confidently forward in later life and employment.

If tutors comment on your expression as ‘vague’ or ‘woolly’, try to think how you could express an idea in more than one way and decide between them. Or enlist a friend’s advice: you may not be aware that what you know intimately is not coming across on paper to another person.

Do try to use paragraphs. They aren’t there simply to look pretty! A simple rule is that you start a new paragraph when moving on to a new point or group of points. If you find yourself writing paragraphs of only one or two sentences, you are maybe not grouping similar or contrasting points together.

Try not to be too pompous by using lots of technical expressions or words that you think sound ‘academic’. CLARITY is the prime aim.

Avoid padding: for example

- greater in number = more
- a greater length of time = longer
- a sufficient number of = enough
- if it is assumed that = assuming
- due to the fact that = because
- on a regular ongoing basis = regularly, often
- which goes under the name of = called

Take care not to repeat yourself: you will get marked down for this. However it is easy to avoid if you have made a clear plan and grouped points together.

Do ring the changes on vocabulary! Here are some useful synonyms (=words with the same meaning):

- discussion, paper, essay, report, analysis
- purpose, aim, goal
- suggest, propose, offer, argue
- analyse, examine, discuss, describe, show, illustrate,
- indicate, point to, suggest, imply
- valuable, worthwhile, of merit, useful, helpful

Don’t always state everything as a fact: much classical debate is arguable. So you may need to express caution. You can do this in several ways:

- by restating briefly an opposing argument, saying who holds it (with reference). Avoid “scholars say that...”: instead “Goldhill (1980:15) says that...”.
- by using ‘modal verbs’, e.g. appears to/seems to/tends to/may/might
- by using adverbs, e.g. perhaps, possibly, probably, apparently, arguably

9.8 Cohesion and logic.

The best essays follow a clear structure and signpost it clearly. However they also link transitions from one point to another.

Think of an essay as like a mosaic: each coloured piece of fact is pretty on its own, but it only really works as a whole when it is given a structure and all of it is glued together. In an essay, logic and cohesion are like the mosaic’s glue. Without it, we have only fragments.

Linking words and ideas is important. You can work at this on your plan.

- Are two ideas contrasting? If so, stress the contrast.
- Are you building up a cumulative argument? If so, stress the addition of the points, maybe numbering them.
• If you are giving an argument, move step by step, showing the links (“and so...”).
• Are you starting out with general remarks and then zooming in to particulars? (“A good example of this is the case of...”).

Here are some common linking words: do feel free to add your own!
• by contrast
• in addition, moreover, furthermore, additionally
• firstly, at first, initially
• whereas, despite
• in particular, especially, particularly
• likewise, similarly
• however, nevertheless, but
• therefore, so, and so, thus, hence, as a result, next, then, consequently
• finally, in conclusion, to conclude, to sum up, in sum

9.9 The main body: how to structure the essay

There are many different ways to do this, depending on the subject studied, the evidence, and the approach of the course. Your tutor can give more detailed guidance.

All essays MUST have:
• introduction (see above)
• main body
• conclusion (see below)

Here are a few sample structures, divided by suggested paragraphs:

9.9.1 Persuading
- I think that....because.... (= introduction)
- My reasons for thinking this are firstly....so....
- Another reason is...
- Moreover.....because...
- These facts/arguments show that... (= conclusion)

9.9.2 Arguing
- Although some disagree, I want to argue that... (= introduction)
- I have several reasons for my point of view. My first reason is...
- A further reason is...
- Furthermore...
- Therefore, although some scholars argue that... (give their opposing view briefly)
- I have shown that... (repeat your view; = conclusion)

9.9.3 Simple explanation
- I want to explain how... (= introduction)
- To begin with...
- And this then means that..../changes...
- After that...
- And as a result...
- Next...
- The final result is that... (= conclusion)

9.9.4 More subtle explanation
- There are differing explanations why/how/what/when... (= introduction)
- One explanation is that...
- The evidence for this is...
- An alternative explanation is...
- This alternative explanation is based upon...
- Of the explanations offered, I prefer....because... (= conclusion)
9.10 Conclusions

Good essays don’t just stop. You should certainly not stop simply because you get to the bottom of a page! Rounding off an essay neatly again impresses the reader: you are again in control.

A conclusion is often brief, but usually includes the following:

• a brief re-statement of the point your essay is making. You stated this at the start as your ‘destination’, now you are there, so say so.
• perhaps a brief recap of the problems or issues you have discussed.

9.11 General Word-Processing Tips

1. Bash it down, then move it around. Get your ideas on the screen while you can remember them, and use the computer to edit them into shape.

2. ... But beware of wordprocessorese: a scatter of points superficially embedded in a cement of arbitrary connectives. Don’t tinker when you ought to be rewriting.

3. Make notes to yourself in the text, if possible in a different style or colour so you can find them at a glance and hide or delete them when printing the fair copy. Most word processors these days have a “hidden” or “invisible” text option that lets you instantly show or conceal all text marked up as hideable.

4. Outline. Outline! Outline. Think hierarchically about your text as a clearly-organised set of topics with subtopics, but at the same time think linearly about the flow and connectedness of your argument. Most word processors already come with an outliner mode, which allows you to view and manipulate your document as a structured outline. For more powerful tools, try out a dedicated commercial program like Inspiration, OmniOutliner, or Scrivener.

5. Never delete text – unlike on paper, you can’t get it back when you change your mind. Four alternatives: (i) convert it to “hidden” text (see 3 above); (ii) move it to a bin file or a dump zone at the end of your document; (iii) keep old versions as separate, dated files, and use document comparison to mark changes; (iv) if your word processor has it, turn on revision tracking.

6. For the same reason, don’t delete old versions and drafts; keep them safe, and clearly labelled, even when you’re sure you’ll never need them again. Disk space is cheap, USB sticks are tiny, and the pain of having to reconstruct work thoughtlessly deleted (or worse, not backed up) is too awful to risk.

7. View as much text on screen as possible. Try double-page views of your document. Check whether your monitor can be turned or mounted in “portrait” orientation. Experiment with the readability of smaller fonts and sizes. And are you sure you need all those rulers, palettes, and toolbars taking up all that screen space when you can access the same commands from menus and/or keyboard?

8. Flip between views (using “hidden” text and/or an outline view) to see your document at different levels of detail. Use multiple windows and/or panes to see different parts or views of your document at once.

9. Explore your word processor, especially the bits you’re scared of. Most people only use about 10% of their word processor’s features, though they’d find at least 70% of them useful. Skim through a list of your word processor’s commands (or even – steady on – read the manual).

10. Read The New Writer: Techniques for Writing Effectively with a Computer by Joan Mitchell, Microsoft Press 1987 (24 years old, but still the only decent book ever written on general word-processing techniques). Long out of print, but abebooks.co.uk always seem to have copies for under a fiver.

10 Extended Essays/Dissertations

Most of you will at some stage of your degree be engaged in writing some kind of dissertation. You will be given a special class on this by tutors when you embark on the course. However there are a few basic observations that can be made.

• Dissertations are not just longer versions of essays. They require a lot more thought and planning, which your supervisor will help you with.

• Relevance and focus are easy to lose when you are faced with a whole mass of material to survey. Your supervisor will help you choose a title/topic that is manageable within your word-limit. Always refer back to that title as you do your research, asking yourself “how does this relate to my specific title?”

• At an early stage you and your supervisor will draw up a dissertation plan. You may need to do some reading first to narrow down the focus.
• You will meet your supervisor regularly for discussions. These one-to-one consultations are otherwise rare and thus very valuable. USE THEM. Raise with your supervisor any problems you think you are facing, however embarrassing you may think them to be!
• Don't think that you can put off writing until well into the course. Your supervisor will expect to see written work early on. Don't worry if it is not your best work. The important thing is to START WRITING. It is much easier to revise and rewrite, to cut and add to existing work, than it is to start from scratch in a panic.
• When you hand in parts of your dissertation, your supervisor will correct errors, suggest improvements and maybe extra reading. PLEASE take such comments on board and make the corrections. Nothing is more disheartening to an examiner than reading a dissertation where easily correctable errors have been left uncorrected. Why throw away good marks?
• Deadlines are deadlines and are not normally negotiable. So you must plan ahead. The best tip is to give yourself a FALSE DEADLINE in your diary, at least a week before the real deadline. Write as if THAT “FALSE” deadline was the final deadline. In this way you can have some ‘emergency’ time for last-minute changes, or, better still, finish it ahead of time! Those who have done this in the past always seem to produce a better quality of work, on time.
• In most cases students are happy with their relationship with their supervisor. However, there are occasions where for some reason the supervisory relationship does not work and breaks down. If this happens, you should speak as soon as possible your Personal Tutor to see whether the problem can be resolved informally, e.g. through mediation, changing supervisor. You should not wait until after you have received your final degree results to raise the matter as it is very difficult for the College to resolve such matters or take remedial action at that point.

11 Language Learning

Many of you may study some ancient language in the original at some stage of your degree. For most of you this is in the first year, when you are still learning how to study course material in translation.

The tips for studying language papers are often, again, common sense, but since many of you are beginners, it does not hurt to suggest a few ideas here. Your tutors are bound to have their own helpful hints too: so ask them.

**TOP TIPS:**

• A good way to build up your vocabulary is to write words you do not know on little flashcards which you can keep in your bag or pocket to look at whenever you have a spare moment or two (whether in the bus or in the bath!). Put the Greek/Latin word on one side, and the translation on the other. Once you feel that you know the word, put the card away, but come back to the words you ‘know’ from time to time just to make sure. Spaced-repetition software like Anki or SuperMemo can automate this process on your desktop, phone, or iPod, with a big boost to the speed, efficiency, and depth of vocabulary learning.
• Use different coloured pens for writing on the cards verbs as opposed to prepositions. Colour here too can help remind you.
• New grammar can be made more familiar and less daunting by adopting a similar tactic. Put each new tense of a verb, for example, on a separate card.
• Do try to remember how ancient words give us English (or French) words. Make those connections, and you can often recall (or guess) a meaning in an unseen.
• Get your classmates to test you and each other, even for only 5 minutes over a coffee. That way you quickly learn to pool your collective memories. Often a joke or strange context will help you to remember it.
• Read out and recite the words aloud to yourself (probably in your room rather than on the train!). You may think that this sounds mad, but by using your ears as well as your eyes to work on your memory, the words often stick.
• Another related idea is to play certain pieces of music while learning vocabulary or grammar. That way, again, your subconscious has an extra ‘tag’ to help recall the word.
• Above all: practice daily, even if just for ten minutes. Make it part of your routine. Put it on your phone. Use those dead moments in queues or waiting for buses and trains. Free software like Anki will set you an automatic daily test based on what you most need to remember.
12 The Advanced Literary Commentary (Original Language)

12.1 Content & approach

Identify the CONTEXT. Combine precision with brevity.
• Pay some attention to what follows as well as to what precedes.
  How does the passage fit into the ‘plot’ of the text?
  Does any significant action take place which picks up an earlier reference, or which is later referred to?
• If the passage is part of direct speech, say so, and identify the speaker.
Explain NAMES, periphrases, allusions (e.g. to mythical characters not named explicitly) & factual references.
Say what needs to be said about the PASSAGE AS A WHOLE. Naturally this will vary from author to author, but the following will give you some guidelines:
• If drama: stagecraft, number of actors, stage doors – anything interesting?
• Stylistic level of the whole passage: colloquial, grandiloquent, everyday speech mingled with grandiose epic parody etc.
• Logical and rhetorical structure.
• Any model? Significant allusions? (e.g. a Greek model for Catullus or Horace; Aeschylus imitated by Euripides; Homer or Lucretius etc. by Vergil...)
• Literary Conventions or Forms: e.g. hymnic style; supplication scene; priamel; ekphrasis; locus amoenus; genre – e.g. paraclausithuron (song outside closed door) or propempticon (wishing farewell)
• Thematic Elements: aspects of the passage which have relevance to the whole work beyond the adjacent context (e.g. recurrent references to the injustice or unpopularity of Empire in Thucydides – say it is but one of many such references, give a parallel if you can, then BRIEFLY say how important it is to Thucydides’ thought; or the use of thematic metaphors e.g. nautical in Euripides’ Troades).
• Philosophic, Moral, Poetic Issues raised (e.g. in Oresteia – morality of revenge, justice of the gods, sacrilege and punishment; or in Georgics – undercutting/questioning of Lucretian/Epicurean ideas).

12.2 Detailed commentary

• Have a Structure.
  EITHER: Proceed in order through your text, like professional commentaries.
  OR: Group your points by topic.
  For either style, you should concentrate on where you think you have most to say.
• INTERPRET, don’t just label something: e.g. it is not enough to say that splendide mendax is an oxymoron without saying what it adds to the text! Or, in Troades, what does a personified reference to the city of Troy add to the mood of the text?
• Give Specific Instances of any General Points you made above. Use the line numbers to save you having to write out the text. For example:
  – specific stage gestures deduced from speech
  – allusions
  – conventions
  – thematic references
  – variation in pace (e.g. breaking into stichomythia after longer speeches; or from lyric to spoken metres etc.): what is it there for?
• Rhetorical Devices (e.g. questions, exaggeration to win over your interlocutor, use of vocatives, appeals for pity etc.)
• Metaphor, Simile, Personification, Etymological Word-Play, Alliteration, Repetition, Metonymy etc.: why are they there?
• Word Order (any unusual features? e.g. inversions for effect; early positioning or delay of a word for emphasis)
• Choice of Vocabulary: is anything unusual, or a sign of a convention? e.g. vocabulary of war for love; nautical imagery for troubles in Greek drama
• Metre: for example:
  – if you know the metre, say so (e.g. Vergil uses dactylic hexameters; tragic dialogue is usually iambic
trimeter). This is especially important for e.g. Horace or Catullus. BUT IF UNSURE – BEST NOT SAY!
- is it stichomythia (one line per speaker), antilabe (line with more than one speaker in it)?
- end-stopped (typical of early Latin hexameters etc.)
- Vergilian “golden lines”
- Ovid ending pentameter with word of more than two syllables
- a line of only, say, three or four words: what effect does that have? (e.g. emphasis; to slow down pace of line)
- enjambement – for effect? (e.g. Vergil keeping an often dactylic verb until the next line for surprise & vividness)
- sound effects: e.g. internal rhyme within line (cf. Gorgianic figures); assonance (same sound within words); or alliteration (same initial letter); but take care not to read too much into it!!

13 Playing the Examinations Game...to win

This section is designed to offer some advice on
• how to prepare for examinations
• how to take them
Much of the following may sound obvious, but past experience shows all too often how valuable it can be to be told the obvious, just one more time. So bear with it...
Remember: DON’T PANIC

You can save yourself a lot of worry and indeed give yourself more confidence by PLANNING BEFOREHAND.

Here are a few ideas on how you might like to prepare for the ordeal.

13.1 Revision Timetable

• Find out the dates and times of the exams as early as you can. You will be sent a timetable from Registry.
• Draw a table of dates on which to map out your revision programme.
• As regards the programme:
  - don’t lump each subject’s revision all together.
    If you were to decide, say, to devote one week per subject, you might well find that you go into the exams well-primed for subject no. 3, which you did most recently, but have forgotten subjects nos. 1 and 2.
  - try doing a little revision for each subject each week.
    [This is especially important for language options, which very soon become rusty.]
    There are several advantages of this system:
    a) the variety will help to keep it all much fresher in your mind;
    b) you will start to see how your syllabus options interrelate.
• Always leave some blank days throughout your programme.

You know how often a friend turns up out of the blue to stay, or you get invited to a party...and then things begin to slide. You can avoid being short of time when it really matters by planning ahead for those “unforeseen circumstances”.

13.2 Preparing the time allocation within the exam

• Check with past papers or your tutor about the allocation of marks to certain sections/questions. [The mark allocations will also be printed on the majority of exam papers to remind you.]
• Work out how much time you should spend per question. This will mean that you do not spend say 20 mins. on a question worth 5 marks and then another 20 mins. on a question worth 25.

Don’t let time be your enemy – make it help your performance.
• This means that when you get into the examination hall, you can be confident that you know how much time you should spend on each question/section.
13.3 General revision hints

- Don't just revise as many subjects as you need to answer questions. Although you can sometimes predict some of the subjects that come up, you can never rely on this. The safest bet is to revise at least twice the number of topics actually required – and even then you might not be lucky.
- You can never predict the questions. How often you see people working out whether a question on say, metics in Athens comes up every three years! It will never work. Just think of how often examiners change within departments or the university as a whole.
- Don't think that because you know the names of the examiners that you can predict their “favourite subjects”. Remember that there is more than one examiner, and that external examiners, even whole departments, have a say in the format of each paper.
- Don't learn off your course essays and hope that you can just reproduce them in the exam: again, the questions in the exam will ALWAYS be different.
- Don't think that because you have good marks on assessment work you can relax your revision. That is a risky game to play.
- SLIM DOWN YOUR REVISION NOTES. You should be aiming to slim down your notes to a bare minimum to revise from the day/night before the exam. Nothing is more demoralizing than coming home to revise and seeing a huge folder awaiting you on your desk. Revising, say, a dozen sheets of carefully strained notes is much easier, and more exciting.
- Remember that Classics is interdisciplinary. Although you may be being examined for say, Greek History, remember that you can often brighten up your answer with parallels involving other relevant disciplines, e.g. literature or art. In this regard, think back during your revision to what you studied in previous years, even at school.
- Don't worry too much about quotes. Examiners much prefer relevant general references to ostentatious and often irrelevant quotation.
  - Many quotes do not an essay make. Let them be simply the icing on the cake.
- Similarly, examiners seldom expect chapter or line numbers! Again, general relevant references will be fine on the vast majority of occasions.
- Timed essays. These are of great use, especially for those who normally write voluminous essays. Practise writing under exam pressure. See how little you can actually get down on paper. It will be a good guide to how to control your revision.

13.3.1 While revising

- Get enough sleep.
- Make sure you keep healthy with sensible exercise and eating habits.
- Keep yourself fresh with a little, judicious socializing. Juvenal was right when he spoke of a “healthy mind in a healthy body”.

13.3.2 The night before

- Set out your pens etc. ready for the morning.
- If you are likely to oversleep, check that you have arranged that a friend should call on you.

13.3.3 Just before the exam

- Make sure you take the bare essentials:
  - pens (MORE THAN ONE!)
  - watch/clock
  - your student ID card (it will be checked during the exam)
- RELAX! You have done all you can by now. Look forward to the exam...

13.4 At your examination desk
• Make sure you can see your watch, or the clock, so that you can easily stick to your time-plan.

13.4.1 Once the exam starts

• Read the WHOLE paper CAREFULLY.
• Make sure that you have all the sheets.
• Double check the instructions (sometimes called ‘the rubric’).
• Once it has been read, choose your questions.
  - Don’t simply choose the, say, three required. Choose a couple more, say five in total. See below for the reasons for this.
• THINK....
• Make up short essay plans on rough paper.
• Once you’ve made your five plans, for example, then select the three best ones.
  The idea of making up more plans than you need is simple.

Often you may leap at a question because it contains a key word or concept which you want to write on. But you may find, on closer thought, that it wasn’t as easy as you had first thought. If you have several other plans up your sleeve, it is then easy to drop the idea and choose the ones you know most about. Similarly, you may suddenly surprise yourself by being able to remember more than you thought about a particular topic. (Yes, it can happen!)

Remember that under examination pressure you will often forget... and remember... surprising things.

13.4.2 Some ideas for essay plan formats

• Keep them BRIEF. At most two or three words per idea. This saves time.
• Make them in vertical list format – this will then mean you can order them more easily with arrows etc. into a logical structure.
• STRUCTURE the essay in plan format and it will all flow naturally when you write it up. This increases your confidence enormously, and, yet again, saves time.

13.4.3 General hints on exam essay structure

The best guide is to do as the ancient rhetoricians advised and to stick to a simple tripartite structure, as with coursework essays:

OPENING para.
BODY of essay
CONCLUDING para.

We can break this down into its “anatomy”:

OPENING: here you might like to dissect the question.
  Do you need to question the use of any specific words/terms?
  Give in brief the point you will make in the essay.
  [This gets the examiner into a positive state-of-mind. S/he will notice that you have something interesting to say, all you need do now is to say it...]
BODY: here you give the “meat” of your answer.
  But break it up by point.
  USE PARAGRAPHS. (If you don’t, the whole essay looks as if it has no structure, and is hard for an examiner to read.)
  Here the list on your essay plan will help you.
  Make sure you back up your points with examples, where necessary. But avoid overkill, obviously. Two or three examples may well be enough per point.

You might like to make sure that you make the body text relevant to the question by referring back to the question’s key words: e.g. is it a question along the lines of “X = Y. Do you agree?”, or “Do you think it is valid to say X?”, or “To what extent is X true?” etc.
CONCLUDING: here, in neat ring-composition style, you might like to recap the thrust of your argument, again recalling the original question. [Hopefully your examiner will now see that you have formulated your thoughts logically and presented them clearly.]

In diagrammatic form, we might summarize the above thus:

1. OPENING paragraph
   - Terms
   - Argument

2. BODY
   - Point
   - Example
   - Point
   - Example
   - Point
   - Example
   - etc.

3. CONCLUDING paragraph
   - Argument

13.4.4 What to do if time is running out

If you suddenly see that you have, say, ten minutes to do your final essay. Don’t panic.
You can still salvage some credit by giving an annotated outline of the essay you would write given time.
Say at the top that you have not enough time for a full essay, and then offer your notes.
Keep them neat.
Make sure you give structure to the notes, and, very importantly, give your examples.
This way, at least, you can get some credit.
But, this is a LAST RESORT.
Hopefully your forward-planning will have spared you that fate.
You MUST do the correct number of questions.
DO NOT LEAVE BLANKS.
Each question will have a set number of marks.
You cannot get away with, say, two long essays because you think you cannot do three. The exams don’t work that way.
If you do not attempt a question at all – easy – you get zero. It’s up to you.

13.4.5 Advice for Language Papers:

DON’T LEAVE BLANKS!

A blank space tells the examiner nothing. Examiners (cruel beasts!) always assume that you know nothing, unless you tell them otherwise.
If you find, in a translation paper for instance, that you do not know how to translate a word, you can at least give the examiner some information to work with:
• is it a noun, verb, adjective etc.?
• what case, gender or tense is it?
• does it agree with anything else?
• if you know what it means, but haven’t a clue otherwise, then tell the examiner what it means.
Such details will at least gain you some credit.

13.4.6 At the end of writing

• Re-read your answers.
It is surprising how easily one forgets to add in crucial words. You might be so busy thinking about say, Medea, that you go through a whole essay simply referring to a “she” and never naming her, or leaving your subjects elsewhere an ambiguous “he”.
Similarly you may be ambiguous in other ways, simply by accident. You may say “and Antigone is another good example” but then not specify which one you mean – do you mean the heroine of the name-play by
Sophocles, or the character in Euripides’ “The Phoenician Women” or the one in Sophocles’ “Oedipus at Colonus”???

- If you need to make corrections on your script, keep them neat and legible.
- Check again that you have done the correct number of questions, from the correct sections.

13.5 After the exam

LEAVE FORGET IT MOVE ON TO THE NEXT

13.6 Some final remarks

- Examinations are psychological games as much as tests. If you know the “rules” and play by them, both you and the examiner will come out happy.
- Think of the exams positively. I know that seems difficult – but go for it! You’ve worked hard (!) and now you can reap the rewards.
- Keep your head!

14 Marking Criteria

The following assessment criteria are intended to allow students to see the general criteria that are used to calculate grades. The assessment criteria give general models of the characteristics that are expected of work being awarded particular grades. However, these criteria can only be indicative, and many pieces of work will have characteristics that fall between two or more classes. Examiners and markers retain the ultimate decision as to the mark given to a particular piece of work.

14.1 Coursework Essays and Dissertations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mark achieved %</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR COURSEWORK ESSAYS AND DISSERTATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85%+ High First Class</td>
<td>demonstrates deep understanding and near-comprehensive knowledge of the subject and primary evidence, and shows significant originality in interpretation or analysis of the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>has a coherent structure, demonstrating excellent critical synthesis of secondary materials, and may show significant innovation in its organisational form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shows overwhelming evidence of in-depth reading, with clear indications of substantial independent reading beyond limits of reading lists and exceptionally intensive, detailed and critical reading of recommended texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>is excellently presented, with referencing and bibliography of standard of publishable journal article in subject area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>has an incisive and fluent style, with no or very minor errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where appropriate, a high first class essay will demonstrate high levels of ability in the analysis of quantitative or qualitative information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A high first coursework essay will usually be worthy of retention for future reference in research or teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Range</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 72, 75, 78, 82%  | **First Class** demonstrates deep understanding and detailed knowledge of the subject and primary evidence, and may show some originality in interpretation or analysis of the question.  
has a coherent structure, demonstrating excellent critical synthesis of secondary materials, and may show some innovation in its organisational form.  
shows significant evidence of in-depth reading, with clear indications of *either* independent reading beyond limits of reading lists or intensive, detailed and critical reading of prescribed readings.  
is excellently presented, with referencing and bibliography close to standard of publishable journal article in subject area.  
has an incisive and fluent style, with no significant errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar.  
Where appropriate, a first class essay will demonstrate high levels of ability in the analysis of quantitative or qualitative information. |
| 62, 65, 68%      | **Upper Second Class** demonstrates a clear understanding and wide-ranging knowledge of the subject and primary evidence, with a direct focus on question  
has a coherent structure, demonstrating good critical synthesis of secondary materials.  
shows clear evidence of in-depth reading, with substantial coverage of recommended texts.  
is well-presented, with detailed referencing in an acceptable style and a properly formatted bibliography.  
has a fluent style, with few errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar.  
Where appropriate, an upper second class essay will demonstrate generally effective and appropriate analysis of quantitative or qualitative information. |
| 52, 55, 58%      | **Lower Second Class** demonstrates a basic understanding and knowledge of the subject and primary evidence, with a focus on question  
has an adequate structure, usually drawing heavily on lectures or other direct teaching.  
shows evidence of limited further reading, with some coverage of recommended texts.  
is adequately presented, with some referencing of sources and a short bibliography.  
has a straightforward style, and may include some errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar.  
Where appropriate, a lower second class essay will demonstrate familiarity with appropriate analysis of quantitative or qualitative information; there may, however, be some significant errors in the process of analysis. |
| 45, 48%          | **Third Class** demonstrates some general understanding and knowledge of the subject and primary evidence, but will also show some weaknesses in detailed understanding or in its range of knowledge. There may be evidence of a lack of clear focus on the wording of the question.  
has a simple structure, usually drawing exclusively on lectures or other direct teaching.  
shows no or very limited evidence of further reading.  
has significant weaknesses in presentation, with little or no referencing of sources, and an inadequate or absent bibliography.  
has a simple style, with significant errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar.  
Where appropriate, a third class essay will demonstrate some very general familiarity with appropriate analysis of quantitative or qualitative information; there will, however, be significant errors in the process of analysis. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42%</td>
<td>Low Third Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>demonstrates limited general understanding of the subject and primary evidence, but will demonstrate significant weaknesses in detailed understanding. The coverage of the essay is likely to be sketchy, with some significant errors in factual details. There may be evidence of a lack of clear focus on the wording of the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>has a sketchy structure, usually drawing exclusively on lectures or other direct teaching, but with significant weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shows no evidence of further reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>is poorly presented, with little or no referencing of sources, and an inadequate or absent bibliography.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>has a sketchy style, and with significant errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where appropriate, a marginal pass will demonstrate a bare familiarity with appropriate analysis of quantitative or qualitative information; there will, however, be substantial errors in the process of analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33, 35, 38%</td>
<td>Marginal Failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>demonstrates no understanding of the subject or of primary evidence, and fails to address the question in any meaningful way. Information supplied is largely erroneous or has little or no relevance to the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>has an inadequate structure, with no sense of a logical argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shows no evidence of further reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>is poorly presented, with no referencing of sources, and an inadequate or absent bibliography.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>has an inadequate style, with significant errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where appropriate, a marginal failure will show significant error and confusion over the appropriate analysis of quantitative or qualitative information; where some analytical work is attempted it is likely to be incomplete and erroneous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-28%</td>
<td>Clear Failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>demonstrates no understanding of the subject or of primary evidence, and fails to address the question in any meaningful way. Information supplied is erroneous or has no relevance to the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>has an incomplete, fragmentary or chaotic structure, with no sense of a logical argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shows no evidence of further reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>is poorly presented, with no referencing of sources, and an inadequate or absent bibliography.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>has an inadequate style, with substantial errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where appropriate, a clear failure will show complete inability to analyse quantitative or qualitative information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Zero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This mark is usually reserved for essays that do not make any serious attempt to answer the question (as defined in College Regulations). It may also be used for exam offences such as unsanctioned late submission or plagiarism, in line with departmental and College procedures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14.2 Language-Based Exercises and Exams

Marking Criteria for Translation of Unseen Passages into English

I First Class (85%+): A response which not only satisfies the criteria for the 70-85% category, but in addition also presents (a) no major and only a few minor errors of grammar and syntax, (b) only a few gaps in vocabulary, filled by intelligent use of the dictionary, and (c) high quality English idiom which conveys the nuances of the original.

I First Class (72, 75, 78, 82%): A response which a) shows accurate understanding of the overall sense of the passage, (b) shows very good understanding of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, with any gaps filled by intelligent use of the dictionary, and (c) renders the text into fluent and idiomatic English.

II i Upper Second (62, 65, 68%): A response which shows a good comprehension of the passage as a whole, spoilt by either (a) one or two major misunderstandings, (b) a larger number of minor errors of grammar, syntax or vocabulary (allowing for appropriate use of the dictionary for unfamiliar vocabulary), or (c) lapses into unidiomatic English.

II ii Lower Second (52, 55, 58%): A response showing (a) patches of coherent understanding sufficient to offer the general gist of at least half of the passage, and the meaning of at least half of the sentences in it, (b) adequate understanding of the general principles of grammar and syntax, (c) some evidence that the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary has been considered with some use of the dictionary, and (d) intelligible English.

III Third (42, 45, 48%): A response revealing (a) a weak grasp of the overall drift of the passage, with understanding of only a small number of sentences and their component clauses, (b) little evidence of understanding of general principles of grammar and syntax, (c) few signs of intelligent dictionary use for unfamiliar vocabulary, and (d) vague or incorrect English.

Marginal Fail (32, 35, 38%): A response which reveals (a) a widespread misunderstanding of the passage, (b) very little evidence of understanding of general principles of grammar and syntax, (c) very little attempt to work out unfamiliar vocabulary, and (d) very vague or incorrect English.

Clear Fail (2-28%): A response which reveals (a) a widespread misunderstanding of the passage, (b) virtually no evidence of understanding of general principles of grammar and syntax, (c) virtually no attempt to work out unfamiliar vocabulary, and (d) poor and/or unintelligible English.

Zero (0%): This mark is usually reserved for work that does not make any serious attempt to translate the passage. It may also be used for exam offences such as unsanctioned late submission or cheating, in line with departmental and College procedures.

Marking Criteria for Translation of Previously Seen Passages into English

I First Class (92%+): A response which in every regard is essentially flawless.

I First Class (82, 85, 88%): A response which not only satisfies the criteria for the 70-80% category, but in addition also presents (a) no major and only a very few minor errors of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, and (b) high quality and independent English, with very good idiom which conveys the nuances of the original and shows independence of thought about meaning and style.

I First Class (72, 75, 78%): A response which shows a) accurate understanding of the overall sense of the passage, (b) very few minor slips of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, or not more than one major error, and (c) fluent and idiomatic English.

II i Upper Second (62, 65, 68%): A response which shows (a) a good comprehension of the passage as a whole,
spoilt by no more than three major and a few minor errors of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, and (b) generally satisfactory and accurate English.

II ii Lower Second (52, 55, 58%): A response showing (a) patches of coherent understanding sufficient to offer the general gist of approximately two-thirds of the passage, and the meaning of at least two-thirds of the sentences in it, (b) adequate understanding of the general principles of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, with no more than five or six major and some minor errors, and (c) intelligible English.

III Third (42, 45, 48%): A response revealing (a) a weak grasp of the overall drift of the passage, (b) correct understanding of not more than half the passage, (c) little evidence of understanding of general principles of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, and/or (d) vague or incorrect English.

Marginal Fail (32, 35, 38%): A response which reveals (a) a widespread misunderstanding of the passage, with less than half rendered correctly, (b) very little evidence of understanding of general principles of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, and (c) very vague or incorrect English.

Clear Fail (2-28%): A response which reveals (a) a widespread misunderstanding of the passage, with less than a quarter rendered correctly, (b) virtually no evidence of understanding of general principles of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, and (c) poor and/or unintelligible English.

Zero (0%): This mark is usually reserved for work that does not make any serious attempt to translate the passage. It may also be used for exam offences such as unsanctioned late submission or cheating, in line with departmental and College procedures.

Additional note:
If translation of previously seen texts is used as part of the formal assessment, care should be taken to ensure that it is weighted appropriately compared to more challenging exercises, such as translation of unseen passages, critical commentaries, or grammatical exercises.

14.3 Written Exams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure and focus</th>
<th>Quality of argument and expression</th>
<th>Range of knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outstanding First Class: 92%+</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work which engages incisively with the question set, and shows a discerning appreciation of its wider implications.</td>
<td>• The writing will be outstandingly eloquent and accurate. There will be a compelling range of vocabulary and linguistic idioms.</td>
<td>• Overwhelming evidence of in-depth reading, with additional clear indications of substantial independent reading beyond limits of reading lists, and exceptionally intensive, detailed and critical reading of recommended texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Has a coherent structure, demonstrating excellent critical synthesis of secondary materials, and innovation in its organisational form. Argued with impeccable consistency.</td>
<td>• Complete conceptual command of the issues at stake. There will be no errors of spelling and grammar.</td>
<td>• Deep and comprehensive understanding of the subject, and outstanding originality in interpretation and analysis of the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Precisely selected factual evidence is deployed in order to support the writer’s argument, using a vigorous sense of relevance and an appropriate economy of expression.</td>
<td>• Exceptionally original in ideas and approach, and developing notably independent lines of thought. Fully confident and articulate intellectual independence, grounded in a penetrating consideration of available evidence.</td>
<td>• Exceptionally informed and secure understanding of the historical period and periods under discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Descriptive material and factual evidence will be</td>
<td>• Ability to move between generalisation and detailed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deployed in order to support and develop the writer's argument, with a vigorous sense of relevance and appropriate economy of expression.</td>
<td>Discussion, and to synthesise as well as particularise to a notably illuminating effect.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to evaluate the nature and status of information at their disposal, and where necessary identify contradiction and achieve a pronounced resolution.</td>
<td>The answer clearly demonstrates in-depth reading and critical analysis of recommended texts, primary sources and secondary literature, including recent articles and reviews.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of the subject.</td>
<td>The writing will be clear, fluent, and accurate. The range of vocabulary and linguistic idioms will be appropriate to the case being developed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The answer demonstrates conceptual command of the historical (and, where appropriate, historiographical) issues at stake.</td>
<td>The answer will demonstrate conceptual command of issues at stake.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives some evidence of originality of thought.</td>
<td>Evidence of originality of thought and analytical skill.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear line or argument.</td>
<td>Discerning consideration of available evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate sense of the evidence.</td>
<td>Clearly constructed and well-presented argument.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to identify contradiction and attempt a resolution.</td>
<td>Ability to move between generalisation and detailed discussion, and to synthesise as well as particularise.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strong First Class: 82, 85, 88%**

- Engages closely with the question set, and shows a mature appreciation of its wider implications.
- The structure of the answer will facilitate a lucid and convincing development of the writer's argument.
- Descriptive material and factual evidence will be deployed in order to support and develop the writer's argument in a concise and relevant manner.
- The answer will be concise and relevant.
- The writing will be clear, fluent, and accurate. The range of vocabulary and linguistic idioms will be appropriate to the case being developed.
- The answer demonstrates conceptual command of the historical (and, where appropriate, historiographical) issues at stake.
- Gives some evidence of originality of thought.
- Clear line or argument.
- Accurate sense of the evidence.
- Ability to identify contradiction and attempt a resolution.
- Eloquent and accurate writing.
- Fully informed conceptual command of issues at stake.
- Evidence of originality of thought and analytical skill.
- Discerning consideration of available evidence.
- Clearly constructed and well-presented argument.
- Ability to move between generalisation and detailed discussion, and to synthesise as well as particularise.
- Ability to identify contradiction and achieve a resolution.
- The answer clearly demonstrates in-depth reading and critical analysis of recommended texts, primary sources and secondary literature, including recent articles and reviews.
- Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of the subject.

**Clear First Class: 75, 78%**

- Engages closely with the question set, and shows a clear appreciation of its wider implications.
- The structure of the answer will facilitate a lucid, coherent, and convincing development of the writer's argument.
- Descriptive material and factual evidence will be deployed in order to support and develop the writer's argument.
- The answer will be concise and relevant.
- The writing will be clear, fluent, and accurate. The range of vocabulary and linguistic idioms will be appropriate to the case being developed.
- The answer demonstrates conceptual command of the historical (and, where appropriate, historiographical) issues at stake.
- Gives some evidence of originality of thought.
- Clear line or argument.
- Accurate sense of the evidence.
- Ability to identify contradiction and attempt a resolution.
- The answer will encompass a good survey of the available evidence.
- The answer will demonstrate good understanding of the historical (and, where appropriate, historiographical) issues at stake.
- Knowledge of relevant contemporary sources, historiography, or secondary literature will be shown where appropriate.
- Develops both general arguments and demonstrates knowledge of necessary detail.
- The answer will demonstrate an informed and secure understanding of the subject under discussion.

**Marginal First Class: 72%**

- Engages with the question set, and shows an appreciation of its wider implications.
- The structure of the answer will facilitate a coherent development of the writer's argument.
- Descriptive material and factual evidence will be appropriately deployed in...
In order to support and develop the writer's argument, the answer will be well-organised. There may be evidence of originality of thought. Understanding of the subject under discussion.

**Upper Second class: 62, 65, 68%**
- Work which displays an understanding of the question, shows an appreciation of some of its wider implications, and makes a serious attempt to engage with the question set.
- The structure of the answer will facilitate a clear development of the writer's argument, towards the lower end of this markband candidates will not sustain an analytical approach throughout.
- Descriptive material and factual evidence will be deployed relevantly. Towards the lower end of this markband candidates may not always bring out the full implications of evidence cited.
- The writing will be clear and generally accurate, and will demonstrate an appreciation of the technical and advanced vocabulary used by scholars. The answer will deploy other scholars' ideas and seek to move beyond them. The answer will also show an appreciation of the extent to which explanations and interpretations are contested. Although the answer might not demonstrate real originality, the writer will present ideas with a degree of intellectual independence, and will demonstrate the ability to reflect on the past and its interpretation.
- Knowledge is extensive, but might be uneven. Demonstrated knowledge will include reference to relevant sources. The range of reading implied by the answer will be considerable.
- The writer will show an ability to move between generalisation and detailed discussion, although there may be a tendency towards either an over-generalised or an over-particularised response.
- Writers will reflect on nature and status of information at their disposal, and will seek to use it critically.
- The answer will demonstrate a secure understanding of the subject under discussion.

**Lower Second class: 52, 55, 58%**
- Work which displays some understanding of the question set, but may lack a sustained focus and may show only a modest understanding of the question's wider implications.
- The structure of the answer may be heavily influenced by the material at the writer's disposal rather than the requirements of the question set. Ideas may be stated rather than developed.
- Descriptive material and factual evidence will be deployed, but not necessarily with the kind of critical reflections characteristic of answers in higher markbands.
- The writing will be sufficiently accurate to convey the writer's meaning clearly, but it may lack fluency and command of the kinds of idioms used by professional scholars. In places expression might be clumsy.
- The answer will show some understanding of scholars' ideas, but may not reflect critically upon them.
- The answer is unlikely to show any originality in approach or argument, and may tend towards assertion of essentially derivative ideas.
- Knowledge will be significant, but may be limited and patchy. There may be some inaccuracy, but basic knowledge will be sound. The range of reading implied by the answer will be limited.
- The writer might be prone to being drawn into excessive narrative or mere description, and may want to display knowledge without reference to the precise requirements of the question.
- Information may be used rather uncritically, without serious attempts to evaluate its status and significance.
- The answer will demonstrate some appreciation of the nature of the subject under discussion.

**Third Class: 42, 45, 48%**
- Work which displays little understanding of the question, and may tend to write
- The writing will generally be grammatical, but may lack the sophistication of vocabulary or
- There will be sufficient knowledge to frame a basic answer to the question, but it
indiscriminately around the question.
- The answer will have structure but this may be underdeveloped, and the argument may be incomplete and unfold in a haphazard or undisciplined manner.
- Some descriptive material and factual evidence will be deployed, but without any critical refection on its significance and relevance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>construction to sustain an argument of any complexity. In places the writing may lack clarity and felicity of expression.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The answer will show no intentional originality of approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will be limited and patchy. There will be some inaccuracy, but sufficient basic knowledge will be present to frame a basic answer to the question. The answer will imply relevant reading but this will be slight in range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ideas of scholars may be muddled or misrepresented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There will be an argument, but writer may be prone to excessive narrative, and the argument might be signposted by bald assertion rather than informed generalizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There will be sufficient information to launch an answer, but perhaps not to sustain a complete response. Information will be used uncritically as if always self-explanatory.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fail: 0 – 38%

| 32, 35, 38% (Narrow fail) | The candidate lacks basic competence in the subject but has enough knowledge to attempt to answer questions. There is evidence of some effort made and that the candidate has understood some of the course content. A mark in this range indicates that the candidate could achieve a pass mark with further independent work or revision. |

| 22, 25, 28% (Fail: retake indicated) | The candidate has extremely limited knowledge or understanding of the content of the course. A mark in this range indicates that the candidate would be unlikely to pass without retaking the course as a whole. |

| 5, 8, 12, 15, 18% | The candidate is unable to attempt adequate answers. |

| 0, 2% | Blank or almost blank answer sheet. |