SCHOOL OF DIVINITY, HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

ACADEMIC SESSION 2017-2018

HA3079 CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES IN ART HISTORY

30 credits 11 weeks + Revision Class

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY:

The full set of school regulations and procedures is contained in the Undergraduate Student Handbook which is available online at your MyAberdeen Organisation page. Students are expected to familiarise themselves not only with the contents of this leaflet but also with the contents of the Handbook. Therefore, ignorance of the contents of the Handbook will not excuse the breach of any School regulation or procedure.

You must familiarise yourself with this important information at the earliest opportunity.

COURSE CO-ORDINATOR

m.pryor-hoa@abdn.ac.uk

COURSE TEAM

Mr John Gash (JoGa) j.gash@abdn.ac.uk;
Professor Jane Geddes (JaGe) j.geddes@abdn.ac.uk;
Dr Helen Pierce (HP) h.pierce@abdn.ac.uk;
Dr Mary Pryor (MP) m.pryor-hoa@abdn.ac.uk;
Dr Aaron Thom (AT) aaron.thom@abdn.ac.uk

Discipline Administration:
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50-52 College Bounds
Room CB001
01224 273733
history-art@abdn.ac.uk
Students can view their university timetable at
http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/timetables-550.php

Classes in CB203: Tuesdays 11.00am-1.00pm; Thursdays 4.00-6.00pm

After the introductory class on Tuesday 12th September, there will be two classes for each topic. **Class 1 (Thursdays)** will introduce the topic (usually a lecture); **Class 2 (Tuesdays)** will involve class discussion (based on the set texts, which you will be expected to have read in advance of the class)

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Tuesday Class (11-1)</th>
<th>Thursday Class (4-6)</th>
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<td>1 11 - 15 Sept</td>
<td>Introduction to the course <em>(MP)</em></td>
<td>Planning &amp; writing a critical bibliography <em>(MP/JaGe)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 18 – 22 Sept</td>
<td>Critiquing a critical bibliography <em>(MP/HP)</em></td>
<td>Panofsky: Iconology &amp; Iconography I <em>(HP)</em></td>
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<td>3 25 – 29 Sept</td>
<td>Panofsky: Iconology &amp; Iconography II <em>(HP)</em></td>
<td>What is 'middle' about the Middle Ages? I <em>(JaGe)</em></td>
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<td>4 02 - 06 Oct</td>
<td>What is 'middle' about the Middle Ages? II <em>(JaGe)</em></td>
<td>Vasari, Zuccaro &amp; Bellori: Theories of the Renaissance &amp; Baroque I <em>(JoGa)</em></td>
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<td>5 09 – 13 Oct</td>
<td>Vasari, Zuccaro &amp; Bellori: Theories of the Renaissance &amp; Baroque II <em>(JoGa)</em></td>
<td>Wölfflin &amp; Morelli: Style in Art I <em>(JoGa)</em></td>
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**Critical annotated bibliography for essay**

**DUE by 3.00pm, Thursday 12th October**

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Tuesday Class (11-1)</th>
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<td>6 16 – 20 Oct</td>
<td>Wölfflin &amp; Morelli: Style in Art II <em>(JoGa)</em></td>
<td>TJ Clark, Orton &amp; Pollock: Marxism &amp; Social Art History I <em>(AT)</em></td>
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Unlike most other art history courses, this is a text-based course, focusing on a number of selected ‘key texts’ (as specified in the course guide and on MyAberdeen). You are expected to study -- not just read through -- these key texts. In addition, you will find it helpful to consult as much of the background reading as possible. In most sessions, the chosen texts will be examined in relation to a small number of pre-chosen images. Discussion will focus on the way in which the issues raised in the prescribed text can usefully illuminate (or otherwise!) the given images.

This is a ‘historiographical’ rather than ‘philosophical’ course; nevertheless philosophical issues are raised at many points and the course should, therefore, appeal to anyone seriously interested in theoretical aspects of art history. The course is complete in itself but connects usefully with other art history courses.

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Lecture Details</th>
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<td>7</td>
<td>23 – 27 Oct</td>
<td>TJ Clark, Orton &amp; Pollock: Marxism &amp; Social Art History II (AT)</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>30 Oct – 03 Nov</td>
<td>NO CLASSES THIS WEEK: FIELDTRIP TO THE BURN, 31 OCTOBER – 1 NOVEMBER</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>06 - 10 Nov</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Feminisms I (HP)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>13 – 17 Nov</td>
<td>Feminisms II (HP/MP)</td>
<td>Fry &amp; Greenberg: Cézanne &amp; Form I (MP)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>20 – 24 Nov</td>
<td>Fry &amp; Greenberg: Cézanne &amp; Form II (MP)</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>27 Nov - 01 Dec</td>
<td>Revision Class (MP/HP)</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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INTENDED AIMS
This course aims to address fundamental questions about the History of Art: its methods and procedures, and how they can be justified. It reflects the greatly increased awareness, both within the discipline itself and outside, of methodological issues.

The ideological bases of the discourse(s) of art history in different periods will be examined, together with the ways that art itself functions within the wider social and political context.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
Students will have demonstrated that they can:

1. Relate art-historical writings to visual imagery
2. Research and write a critical bibliography on a topic of art criticism
3. Research and write a critical essay on a topic of art criticism
4. Display knowledge and comprehension of the course material through the organisation of an essay-based answer in a written examination
5. Critically analyse a short extract of text in a written examination

RECOMMENDED READING / PURCHASE


LIBRARY RESOURCES

[Quick Guide to History of Art Resources](#)
READING & PREPARATION WEEK BY WEEK

Week 1

Tuesday 12th September

Introduction to the Course (Mary Pryor)

No preparation is required for this class.

Thursday 14th September

Planning and writing a critical bibliography (Mary Pryor & Jane Geddes)

No preparation is required for this class.

Week 2

Tuesday 19th September

Critiquing a critical bibliography (Mary Pryor)

Please come prepared having read the material on MyAberdeen

Weeks 2/3: Thursday 21st & Tuesday 26th September

Panofsky: Iconography and Iconology (Helen Pierce)

Essential preparation for Tuesday’s class:

Reading (texts supplied on MyAberdeen):


E. Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting (1953), pp. 201-3.


Questions for class discussion

1. What does Panofsky mean by ‘disguised symbolism’?

2. Are you convinced by his ‘reading’ of Van Eyck’s painting, especially in the light of Campbell’s queries?

3. Look at Rubens’ paintings from the Marie de Medici cycle and the Whitehall Ceiling. How much of what is depicted in these Baroque artworks is “real” in any simple sense, and how might this impact upon their intended audience?

4. Apply Panofsky’s approach to Reynolds’ portrait of James Beattie.

5. How do we decipher meaning in Raeburn’s Sir John and Lady Clerk, despite its lack of overt symbolism?

Images

Jan van Eyck, The Arnolfini Marriage, 1434, National Gallery, London

Peter Paul Rubens, The Education of Marie de Medici, 1622-5, Louvre, Paris

Peter Paul Rubens, The Disembarkation of Marie de Medici at Marseilles, 1622-5, Louvre, Paris

Peter Paul Rubens, The Union of the Crowns, Whitehall Banqueting House, London

Joshua Reynolds, Dr James Beattie, 1773, University of Aberdeen

Henry Raeburn, Sir John and Lady Clark, 1791, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin

Background reading


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**Weeks 3/4: Thursday 28th September & Tuesday 3rd October**

**What is 'middle' about the Middle Ages?** (Jane Geddes)

**Thursday Lecture:**

1. The lecture will cover a range of questions: how the Middle Ages got their name; why artistic style in the middle ages differs from Classical and renaissance styles; the impact of Christianity on art. A range of texts are available on [MyAberdeen](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/sugar.html) to accompany the lecture, and they will be explained in this class.

2. 4 slides of medieval art will be placed on [MyAberdeen](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/sugar.html).

**Preparation:** please look at these and consider how many ‘approaches to art history’ can be applied to these objects. How many different methods can you use to analyse them?

**Essential preparation for the Tuesday class:**

**Reading and Questions**

The subject is *De Administratione* by Abbot Suger of St Denis.

1. You all need to read his own account

   [http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/sugar.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/sugar.html)

   Important sections are XXIV Decoration, XXV First addition, XVII Gilded door, XXXIII Main altar, XXXIV Windows.
What does Suger actually see when he looks at the art in his church?

What does he not see? What interests him about this art? What does not interest him? Does his text contain any particular polemic or underlying message? Who is it written for?

The full text is in E. Panofsky, Abbot Suger, On the abbey church of St Denis, 726.7

2. How does Panofsky interpret Suger in his Introduction?

3. How does Peter Kidson reply to Panofsky?

   http://www.jstor.org/stable/i230462, ‘Panofsky, Suger and St Denis’


If you select the essay question that relates to this week of the course:

‘Explain the different approaches taken by Panofsky and Kidson, with reference to Abbot Suger’s De Administratione. Are they right and wrong, or just different?’

For the critical review of sources: Abbot Suger and his building works.

Write a critical review of 4 of the following sources.

L. Grant, Suger, Abbot of St Denis, 274.404 Sug G

O. Von Simson, The Gothic Cathedral, (1956). The philosophical and iconographical aspects of the building. Don’t be put off by the footnotes. The chapter on light is particularly revealing. 726.6 Sim

E. Panofsky, Abbot Suger, On the abbey church of St Denis, (Introduction) 726.7


Conrad Rudolph, Artistic change at St Denis: Abbot Suger’s program and the early 12C controversy over art. 726.7
Weeks 4/5: Thursday 5th October & Tuesday 10th October
Vasari, Zuccaro & Bellori: Renaissance and Baroque Theories of Art
(John Gash)

Thursday Lecture: Vasari on artistic progress and artistic genius

Background reading
Panofsky, E, ‘The first page of Giorgio Vasari’s Libro’ in *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, pp.206-76
Wittkower, R & M, *Born under Saturn* (esp. chapter 12) [701.15 Wit]

Essential preparation for the Tuesday class:
Idealist theories of art: from Federico Zuccaro to Giampietro Bellori.

Reading Texts
Questions

1. Why do ambitious artists favour artistic academies over more traditional guilds?
2. In what order are the different subjects and categories of art placed in the academic ordering of the arts?
3. What is understood by the ‘Idea’ in idealist theory?

Background Reading


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WEEK 5: Critical annotated bibliography for essay

DUE by 3.00pm, Thursday 12th October

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Weeks 5/6: Thursday 12th & Tuesday 17th October

Wölfflin & Morelli: Style in Art (John Gash)

Thursday Lecture: Giovanni Morelli: pioneer of connoisseurship

Background reading

Giovanni Morelli, extracts from *Italian Painters* (1890) in Fernie, text 8, and the note on ‘Connoisseurship’, pp.330-1.

Giovanni Morelli, *Italian Masters in German Galleries*, 1883 and other editions

Gibson-Wood, C. *Studies in the theory of connoisseurship from Vasari to*
Morelli, 1988 [701.18 Gib]


Wind, E, *Art and anarchy* (on Morelli) [701 Win]


**Essential Preparation for the Tuesday class:**

Heinrich Wölfflin’s use of formal analysis in defining period styles

**Reading Text**


**Images**

Andrea del Sarto, *Madonna of the Harpies*, 1517, Florence, Uffizi

Giovanni Lanfranco, *The Ecstasy of St Margaret of Cortona*, 1622, Florence, Pitti Palace

**Questions**

1. What does Wölfflin mean by ‘imagination beholding’?

2. What does he mean by the *Zeitgeist*?

3. How useful are Wölfflin’s ‘five pairs of concepts’?

**Background reading**


Roskill, M, *The Interpretation of Pictures*, pp. 99-102

Sauerlander, W, ‘From stilus to style...’ *Art History*, vol 6, pp.253-70


Wölfflin, H, *Classic Art*, 1952 and subsequent editions

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**Weeks 6/ 7: Thursday 19th & Tuesday 24th October**

**TJ Clark, Orton & Pollock: Marxism (Aaron Thom)**

**Thursday lecture:** Marx and Marxist Art History

**Background reading**


Karl Marx, Preface to ‘A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy’
(extract, in Golby, J M, *Culture & Society in Britain 1850-1890*, 13-14)

[9(42)81 Gol]

**Tuesday class:** Oil painting as a reflection of social class
Essential Preparation for the Tuesday class:

Reading


http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/crown.html

Images

Thomas Gainsborough, c. 1750, *Mr and Mrs Andrews*, London, National Gallery

Hugh Cameron, *The Harvest*, 1865, Private Collection.

William Darling McKay, *The Stonebreakers*, 1878. Oil on canvas, 48.3 x 68.5 cm. © The Drambuie Collection, Edinburgh.

Gustave Courbet, *The Stonebreakers*, 1850, Destroyed

Questions

1. Do you believe Berger’s argument regarding the medium of oil?
2. To what extent can art be described as a social product?
3. How useful is the concept of ideology?
4. How might Cameron’s painting relate to the arguments on work made by Ruskin?
5. Compare and contrast the Courbet and the McKay painting as products of their social context.

Background reading

Chapter 5. [701.17 Mar]

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**Week 7: NO CLASS on THURSDAY 26th October**

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**Week 8: 30th October – 3rd November: NO CLASSES**

FIELDTRIP TO THE BURN, 31st October – 1st November

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**Week 9: Tuesday 7th November NO CLASS;**

**ESSAY DUE by 3.00pm, Thursday 9th November**

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**Weeks 9/10: Thursday 9th & Tuesday 14th November**

Feminisms (Helen Pierce/Mary Pryor)

**Thursday lecture:** Feminist Approaches to the History of Art (HP)

**Essential preparation for Tuesday’s tutorial (HP/MP):**


You can find a helpful online summary of Nochlin’s influential essay at [https://hyperallergic.com/377975/an-illustrated-guide-to-linda-nochlins-why-have-there-been-no-great-women-artists/](https://hyperallergic.com/377975/an-illustrated-guide-to-linda-nochlins-why-have-there-been-no-great-women-artists/) - but make sure you also read the original text.


View the Guerrilla Girls’ website at [www.guerrillagirls.com](http://www.guerrillagirls.com)

All printed texts available from [MyAberdeen](http://www.myaberdeen.com)

**Questions for Tuesday’s class discussion:**

1. Should art historians continue to ask ‘why have there been no great women artists’?
2. To what extent does ‘The Dinner Party’ challenge Nochlin’s appraisal of women’s artistic achievements? To what extent does this artwork reinforce Nochlin’s perspective?
3. “The work is what it is and hopefully it’s seen as feminist work, or feminist-advised work, but I’m not going to go around espousing theoretical bullshit about feminist stuff.” (Cindy Sherman) Do you consider Sherman to be an artist with a feminist agenda?

See [MyAberdeen](http://www.myaberdeen.com) for a selection of key images which will be used to support the class discussion.

**Further reading on this topic**


Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (eds.), *Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany* (1982).


Judy Chicago’s ‘The Dinner Party’ at the Brooklyn Museum:

https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/eascfa/dinner_party/home/

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**Weeks 10/11: Thursday 16th & Tuesday 21st November**

**Fry & Greenberg: Cézanne & Form** (Mary Pryor)

**Thursday Class:** Cézanne and Form

**Essential preparation for Tuesday class:**

**Reading** (on MyAberdeen):

Roger Fry, Cézanne: A study of his development, 1927 (extracts)

Clement Greenberg, Cézanne: Gateway to contemporary painting The American Mercury, June 1952, pp. 69-73

http://www.unz.org/Pub/AmMercury-1952jun-00069?View=PDFPages
Questions

1. What main similarities and differences do you perceive between the approaches by Fry and Greenberg to writing about Cézanne’s use of form?

2. Greenberg: ‘Cezanne's aim was to carry over the frank, liberated color of the Impressionists into pictures that would be as firmly and lucidly put together as those of an Old Master like Raphael or Poussin.’ To what extent do you think Greenberg argues that Cézanne succeeded in his aim? Does Fry agree with this?

3. What strengths and weaknesses does Verdi find in Fry’s study of Cézanne?

Images

Please see the selection of images on MyAberdeen, which you can use to evidence your answers to the questions.

Background reading


Roger Fry - Cézanne: A study of his development, 1927. 1952 imprint (759.44 Cez) 1960 imprint (759.44 Cez)


Roger Fry, JB Bullen, Vision & Design, 1981 (709 Fry)

Fry http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/fyry.htm

Greenberg http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/greenberg.htm

Week 11: Thursday 24th November: NO CLASS

Week 12: Tuesday 29th November:

REVISION CLASS (Mary Pryor & Helen Pierce)
COURSE ASSESSMENT

Two written coursework assignments (25% each) = 50% of the final course grade

One 2-hour written examination = 50% of the final course grade

In your coursework assignments, and in the exam, you will be expected to demonstrate first-hand knowledge of the key texts and, where appropriate, the images discussed in relation to these texts.

Students who are retaking the entire course (not just the exam and resits) must submit new essays for their coursework. It is not permitted to resubmit previous essays.

To view the CGS Descriptors please go to MyAberdeen - Organisations - Divinity, History, & Philosophy Student Information for Undergraduates. The link to the CGS Descriptors is on the left hand menu.

COURSEWORK ASSESSMENTS

Select ONE question from the list of essay topics given below. You will work on the resulting essay in two stages:

1. Critical Bibliography: DUE by 3.00pm on Thursday 12th October (Week 5)

   Write a critical annotated bibliography on your chosen topic using four core sources (given in the reading lists) and one further source of your own finding.

   Word count: circa 350 words per source; approx. 2,000 words overall (10% margin allowed)

   Feedback will focus on your summaries and critical evaluations of the sources, which should include how these sources will be of use for your essay.

   SEE Guide to Writing a Critical Annotated Bibliography on MyAberdeen
2. **Essay: DUE by 3.00pm on Thursday 9th November** (Week 9)

   Write an essay on your chosen topic with a bibliography that includes, but is not restricted to, the sources analysed in Assignment 1.

   **Word count:** 2,000 words

   Essays should be approximately **2,000 words** long, including quotations and footnotes; you should note that you will be penalised for work which is either too long or too short. The acceptable margin below or above the word count for essays is 10%.

**LIST OF ESSAY TOPICS**

CHOOSE ONE ESSAY TOPIC ONLY AND USE FOR BOTH ASSIGNMENTS:

   The critical annotated bibliography &

   The full essay

**Panofsky:**

To what extent do you agree with the statement that “without a knowledge of iconography and symbolism, our reading of renaissance and baroque works of art will be at best naive and inadequate”?

**Middle Ages:**

Explain the different approaches taken by Panofsky and Kidson, with reference to Abbot Suger’s *De Administratione*. Are they right and wrong, or just different?

**Vasari & Bellori:**

Does Bellori’s concept of the Ideal owe anything to Vasari’s notion of artistic progress?

**Wölfflin:**

How successful was Heinrich Wölfflin’s attempt to link his concepts of closed and open form to the predominant artistic styles of particular periods?
Marxism:
How accurate is it to describe T.J. Clark’s writing on Courbet as ‘Marxist art history’?

Feminisms:
Choose ONE female artist and discuss the strengths and limits of a feminist analysis of her work.

Cézanne:
Compare and contrast Fry and Greenberg’s perspectives on the use of space and colour in Cézanne’s works.

ASSESSMENT DEADLINES
1. Critical Bibliography is DUE by 3.00pm on Thursday 12th October 2017
2. Final Essay is DUE by 3.00pm on Thursday 9th November 2017

SUBMISSION ARRANGEMENTS
Submit one paper copy with a completed essay cover sheet to the drop boxes in CB008 in 50-52 College Bounds and one official electronic copy to TurnitinUK via MyAberdeen. Both copies to be submitted by 3.00pm on the due date.

Paper Copy: One paper copy, typed and double spaced, together with an Assessment cover sheet – this should have your ID number clearly written on the cover sheet, with NO name or signature but EVERYTHING ELSE completed, including tutor’s name – and should be delivered to the drop boxes in CB008, 50-52 College Bounds.

Electronic Copy: One copy submitted through TurnitinUK via MyAberdeen. (for instructions please see http://www.abdn.ac.uk/eLearning/turnitinuk/students/)
Students are asked to retain the TurnitinUK receipt so they are able to provide proof of submission at a later date if required.

In advance of uploading, please save the assignment with your student ID number listed in the filename, i.e. 59999999 HA3079 Essay 1.

When asked to enter a title for the assignment, please enter a title identical to the name of your saved assignment, i.e. 59999999 HA3079 Essay 1.

Both copies to be submitted by **3.00pm** on the due date

_**Please note:** Failure to submit both an official electronic copy to TurnitinUK, and an identical paper copy, will result in a deduction of marks._

Failure to submit to TurnitinUK will result in a zero mark.

**EXAMINATION**

One **two-hour** examination held in December. This exam will consist of:

- **ONE** compulsory question based on the analysis of a short passage from a key text discussed in class. Students choose **ONE** of three passages to discuss.
- **ONE** essay-based question selected from a list of four choices. The questions will relate closely to the material addressed in the classes.

To view the CGS Descriptors please go to [MyAberdeen - Organisations- Divinity, History, & Philosophy Student Information for Undergraduates](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/).

Past exam papers can be viewed at [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/).

_**Please Note:** For this course, candidates whose first language is not English may refer to English/native tongue dictionaries. Electronic dictionaries are not permitted in the examination venue. Invigilators are entitled to request inspection of dictionaries prior to the examination, to check that there is no extra written material present._