SCHOOL OF DIVINITY, HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

ACADEMIC SESSION 2016-2017

HI4009 – SPECIAL SUBJECT
The Scottish Wars of Independence, 1286-1328

30 CREDITS: 12 WEEKS

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/COURSE TEAM
Alastair Macdonald: tel. 01224 273927; email: a.j.macdonald@abdn.ac.uk;
office hours: Mondays and Tuesdays, 11-12 (room 103, Crombie Annexe)

Discipline Administration:
Mrs Barbara McGillivray/Mrs Gillian Brown
50-52 College Bounds
Room CBLG01
01224 272199/272454
history-ug@abdn.ac.uk

TIMETABLE
For time and place of classes, please see MyAberdeen

Students can also view their university timetable
at http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/timetables-550.php
COURSE DESCRIPTION

In 1286 Alexander III of Scotland was found dead at the foot of a cliff and Scotland was engulfed in a period of political instability and eventually war that was to have a profound impact on the future development of the British Isles. The course considers key stages of the ‘wars of independence’ period in chronological sequence until the final triumph of Robert I in 1328. Due consideration will be given to international perspectives in trying to understand the Anglo-Scottish struggle, notably in relation to Ireland, France, Flanders and the Papacy. There will also be full consideration of the ‘civil war’ aspect to the struggle most obvious in the clash of Bruce and Balliol supporters after 1306. Alongside this examination of the unfolding political events wider themes will be considered on a weekly basis. These themes include attempts to understand the personalities of some of the major players and analysis of a variety of social groups (such as women and clerics) and conceptual frameworks (geographical factors, national identity, frontier societies) vital for understanding both insular international relations in this period and important developments within the Scottish kingdom.

INTENDED AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Aim The aim of this course is to study carefully Anglo-Scottish relations within a wide international framework, and examine developments in the kingdom of Scotland itself in the period 1286-1328. It is hoped that exploration of selected key themes alongside the political events will lead students to a rich appreciation of the period and an ability to offer analytical insights on it based on close scrutiny of a range of primary source materials.

Learning Outcomes

Intellectual skills
By the end of the course, students should be able:
• to outline key events in the ‘wars of independence’ period
• to adopt a broad, international framework in seeking to understand the course of Anglo-Scottish relations and developments within Scotland
• to understand the interplay between political, social, cultural, religious and other factors
• to consider critically the views of historians who offer differing perspectives on key themes relating to the subject

Personal and Transferable Skills
This course is intended to sharpen skills in:
• analysing both contemporary primary sources and secondary sources
• written communication (through course work and examinations) and verbal communication (in seminar presentations and discussion)
• reaching informed judgements and coherent conclusions with the assistance of tutors’ comments on written work and oral presentations
• IT, including word processing and internet retrieval, through preparation for seminars and essays
• Independent learning, through preparation for course work and seminars

**Attitudinal Skills**
This course is intended to enhance appreciation and awareness of:
• the problems and challenges faced by individuals, institutions and groups in a time of crisis and upheaval
• historiographical debates relating to the subject
• the skills characteristic of the professional historian and the particular problems and challenges faced by students of medieval history

**SEMINAR PROGRAMME**
As indicated below the seminar schedule covers the main political events in chronological order with particular related themes being covered on from week 3 on Thursdays. Detailed discussion will be based on a broad range of primary source materials to be read by all class members on a weekly basis. These will be distributed in advance of the appropriate seminar sessions. Attendance at seminars is mandatory. Students are expected to make full verbal contributions at these sessions and to make presentations on selected topics.

**Week 1**
Mon 12 Sep  Introductory: Organisation; Aims; Library Skills  
Thu 15 Sep  Two ‘Superpowers’? Scotland, England and Britain

**Week 2**
Mon 19 Sep  The Succession Crisis and the Process of Norham, 1286-1291  
Thu 22 Sep  The ‘Great Cause’ and the Reign of King John, 1291-1296

**Week 3**
Mon 26 Sep  The Edwardian Conquest, 1296  
Thu 29 Sep  Theme: The Character of Edward I

**Week 4**
Mon 3 Oct  First short essay Thursday 6 October by 3pm  
Thu 6 Oct  William Wallace, Andrew Murray and the Rising of 1297  
       Theme: Land and Sea: Geography and the Attempt to Conquer Scotland

**Week 5**
Mon 10 Oct  The Great Stalemate: 1298-1303  
Thu 13 Oct  Theme: Clergy, Church and War

**Week 6:**
Mon 17 Oct The Second Conquest: 1304-1305
Thu 20 Oct Theme: William Wallace as a National Icon

Week 7
Mon 24 Oct Brucian Revolution, Brucian Disaster: 1306-1307
Thu 27 Oct Theme: Women, War and Politics

Week 8:
Mon 31 Oct Bannockburn and the Turning of the Tide: 1308-1314
Thu 3 Nov Theme: A War of Chivalry?

Week 9
Mon 7 Nov War, Famine and Brutality: Northern England and Ireland, 1315-1319
Thu 10 Nov Theme: Creation of a Frontier Society?

Week 10 Second short essay Thursday 17 November by 3pm
Mon 14 Nov Securing the Throne? 1320-1326
Thu 17 Nov Theme: A Clash of Nations? National Identity

Week 11
Mon 21 Nov Winning the Peace: 1327-1328
Thu 24 Nov Theme: The Character of Robert I

Week 12 Revision Week
Mon 28 Nov ‘Gobbet’ Exercise

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Extensive reading is an essential part of any course in History and will deepen your understanding and enjoyment of the period and the discipline of history. The select bibliography offered below provides points of departure for further reading on the topics covered in the course. The footnotes and bibliographies of these books and articles will lead you to other sources; the search-features of the library catalogue, browsing the open shelves, and consulting the course co-ordinator are other ways forward. A major outcome of a university education is an ability to find information on any topic within your field. You are encouraged to show initiative in developing this ability.

Internet Resources
De Re Militari (military history): http://deremilitari.org/
People of Medieval Scotland 1093-1314: http://www.poms.ac.uk/
Survey of Dedication to Saints in Medieval Scotland: http://www.shc.ed.ac.uk/Research/saints/Project.htm

Primary Sources
Guides to sources: general
Donaldson, G., *The Sources of Scottish History* (1978)
Webster, B., *Scotland from the eleventh century to 1603* (1975)

Guides to sources: specific

Record Sources
*Calendar of Close Rolls*
*Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. Bliss, W.H., et al., eds., (1894-)
*Calendar of Patent Rolls*

English Historical Documents, ed. D.C. Douglas et al., vols. iii (1975) and iv (1969)


Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707, ed. K. Brown, et al.: http://www.rps.ac.uk/


Scottish Historical Documents, ed. G. Donaldson (1970)

Documents Illustrative of the History of Scotland 1286-1306, ed. J. Stevenson
[selected texts published in full, with translations of those in French]

Narrative Sources


Barbour, John, The Bruce. [Editions by: W Skeat (Scottish Text Society, 2 vols, 1894); W M Mackenzie (1909); A A H Douglas (1964); A.A.M. Duncan (1997)]


Chronicle of Bury St Edmunds, ed. A. Gransden (1964)

Chronicle of Lanercost, 1272-1346, ed. H. Maxwell (1913)

Fordun, John, Chronicle of The Scottish Nation, ed. W.F. Skene (The Historians of Scotland, 1872)

Gray, Sir Thomas, Scalacronica, ed. A. King (Surtees Society, 2005)


Secondary Sources

Reference Works

Cowan, I.B., Parishes of Medieval Scotland (Scottish Record Society, 1967)


Dunbar, A.H., Scottish Kings (2nd ed., 1906)

Gough, H., Itinerary of Edward I (2 vols., 1900)


Paul, J.B., The Scots Peerage (9 vols, 1904-14)

[list of office-holding clergy of the Scottish church]  

**Relevant Journals**

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIHR</td>
<td><em>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</em></td>
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<td>EHR</td>
<td><em>English Historical Review</em></td>
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<td>History</td>
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<td>History Scot.</td>
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<td>IHS</td>
<td><em>Irish Historical Studies</em></td>
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<td>IR</td>
<td><em>Innes Review</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>JMH</td>
<td><em>Journal of Medieval History</em></td>
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<td>NH</td>
<td><em>Northern History</em></td>
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<td>Nott. Med. St.</td>
<td><em>Nottingham Medieval Studies</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>PSAS</td>
<td><em>Proceedings of the Soc. of Antiquaries of Scotland</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>RSCHS</td>
<td><em>Records of the Scottish Church History Society</em></td>
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<td>SHR</td>
<td><em>Scottish Historical Review</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>TDGAS</td>
<td><em>Transactions of the Dumfries and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>TCWAAS</td>
<td><em>Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>TRHS</td>
<td><em>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</em></td>
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**General Works**

Ferguson, W., *Scotland’s Relations with England* (1977)  
Penman, M., *Robert the Bruce King of Scots* (2014)  

**Preludes to War and Background**

Taylor, A., *The Shape of the State in Medieval Scotland, 1124-1290* (2016)

**The First Wars, 1296-1305**

Goldstein, R.J. ‘The Scottish mission to Boniface VIII in 1301’, *SHR*, 70 (1991)

**Wars of the Bruces, 1306-1328**
Grant, A., ‘The Death of John Comyn: what was going on?’, *SHR*, 86 (2007)


**Wider Perspectives**


Davies, R.R., *Domination and Conquest* (1990)


Ditchburn, D., ‘Anglo-Scottish Relations in the Later Middle Ages: The Other Side of the Coin’ [available from course co-ordinator]


Helle, K., ‘Norwegian Foreign Policy and the Maid of Norway’, *SHR*, 69 (1990)


**Themes: Edward I**
McFarlane, K.B., ‘Had Edward I a Policy towards the Earls?’ *History*, 50 (1965)  

**Themes: ‘Ordinary’ People**

**Themes: Conquering Scotland**
Reid W.S., ‘Trade, Traders and Scottish Independence’, *Speculum* 29 (1954)
Reid W.S., ‘Sea-power in the Anglo-Scottish War, 1296-1328’, *The Mariner’s Mirror*, 46 (1960)
Southern, P., ‘Men and Mountains, or geographical determinism in the conquest of Scotland’, *PSAS*, 126 (1996)

**Themes: The Church**
Barrow, G.W.S., ‘The Scottish Clergy and the War of Independence’, *SHR*, 41 (1962)

**Themes: William Wallace**
Fraser, J., ‘“A Swan from a Raven”: William Wallace, Brucean propaganda and *Gesta Annalia II’*, *SHR*, 81 (2002)

**Themes: Women**

**Themes: Chivalry and Warfare**
**Themes: Frontier Society**


**Themes: National Identity**


**Themes: Robert I**


Penman, M., *Robert the Bruce King of Scots* (2014)

**ASSESSMENT**

Assessment is based on one three-hour degree examination at 100% of the final assessment. The Degree Examination will be held in December. The purpose of the examination is to test your ability to analyse and synthesise material covered in the course. During the examination you will write on two essay questions and four gobbets.

Feedback on all assessment should be timely and normally provided within a maximum of three working weeks (excluding vacation periods) following the deadline for submission of the assessment.

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.

**PLEASE NOTE:** In order to pass a course on the first attempt, a student must attain a Common Grading Scale (CGS) mark of at least E3 on each element of
course assessment. Failure to do so will result in a grade of no greater than CGS E1 for the course as a whole.

FORMATIVE COURSE WORK

You are required to submit two short essays (about 1000 words each) and complete a ‘gobbet’ exercise. The essays and ‘gobbet’ exercise help in the development of analytical skills necessary for the successful completion of the exam.

Essays
The deadlines for submission of the essays are **Thursday, 6 October (not later than 3pm)** and **Thursday, 17 November (not later than 3pm)**. Students will be provided with possible questions, but they may frame questions of their choice after consultation with the course co-ordinator. Essays will be returned with a mark taken from the Common Grading Scale with written comments. All essays will be returned individually, providing you with the opportunity to discuss your essay, techniques of essay-writing, and other aspects of the course with the course co-ordinator. Before starting your essay, consult the section on essay-writing in the Department’s *Student Guidelines*. The scholarly apparatus used (bibliography and referencing styles) should conform to the History Department Referencing guide. This is available on MyAberdeen.

‘Gobbet’ Exercise
The ‘gobbet’ exercise will be undertaken under exam conditions on **Monday 28 November at 2pm** in the usual teaching room. Exercises will be returned with marks on the CGS and written comments.

ESSAY SUBMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Please submit by the deadline ONE paper copy (cover sheet required) PLUS, ONE official electronic copy (no cover sheet required) as follows:

**Hard Copy:** One hard 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 and NO signature but EVERYTHING ELSE filled in – and should be delivered to the History Admin Office [Drop-off boxes located in CB008, 50-52 College Bounds].

**Electronic Copy:** One copy submitted through Turnitin via MyAberdeen. (For instructions please see [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/eLearning/turnitinuk/student](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/eLearning/turnitinuk/student).}
Students are asked to retain the Turnitin 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 Viking 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 Viking Essay 1.

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

**Please note:** Failure to submit both an electronic copy to Turnitin and a hard copy to the school office, by the stated deadline, will result in a zero mark. N.B Turnitin doesn’t accept Mac documents in Pages. If using a Mac please go to File and export work as a Word document.

**EXAMINATION**

The three-hour degree examination consists of twelve questions. You must answer question 1 and two other questions. In question 1 you must critically analyse four primary source extract ‘gobbets’ from a choice of ten. Questions 2-12 are traditional essay-type questions designed to test your knowledge and understanding of the course and your critical and analytical skills. Class teaching will feature detailed preparation for the examination.

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/)

**GUIDELINES ON USING PRIMARY SOURCES**

To make the best out of this kind of evidence about the past, you should first read quickly through the document, bearing in mind certain questions:

- What kind of document is it? What is its general nature and purpose: a treaty, a charter, a private letter, a public letter or what? Whether it was private, open or confidential may be important. When was the document produced - i.e. is it contemporary with the events it describes?
- What does the document say? Is its timing significant?
- Is the document authentic or is it a forgery? Is it accurate and trustworthy? Was it designed to deceive?
- Why might it be important: because of its author’s standing; because of the information or the views it contains; or because it had directly or indirectly an effect on events?
These questions can be broken down further through investigation of the background.

- Who was (were) the author(s)? What was the document’s provenance? What is known about the author? What bits of this information are particularly important for understanding and assessing the importance of the document?
- Has the author first-hand knowledge of what she/he is writing about? Is she/he writing from hearsay or with hindsight? Is so, does this add or subtract from the value of the document?
- Why is the author writing: to give an order, convey information or influence others? Does the document make significant omissions or assumptions?
- Who was meant to see the document and who did see it?
- What effects, if any, did the document have on events? If it was designed to bring change, did it do so and in the way expected? Was it designed to stave off developments and did it succeed in doing so? Did it influence a person or group’s attitudes and actions, by design or unintentionally?

If you are asked to write a commentary on a document or documentary extract, the commentary should contain two or three major points. In writing your commentary, focus on the extract itself, referring to the document as a whole only when it helps your understanding or influences your assessment of the significance of the extract itself. Different extracts, as also different documents need to be investigated and assessed in different ways, so use the guidelines flexibly.

In writing a commentary you will necessarily have to be selective but generally aim to comment on who wrote, to whom, and why, what the extract says, and why the extract (and on occasion the whole document) is important for the historian in throwing light on the particular development or issue.

See also the leaflet ‘Reading Historical Documents’ in the Course Materials Folder on MyAberdeen.