SCHOOL OF DIVINITY, HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

ACADEMIC SESSION 2016-2017

HI 5915
Dissertation in Historical Studies

(75 Credits)

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY:
The full set of school regulations and procedures is contained in the Postgraduate 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
Prof. Andrew Blaikie (a.blaikie@abdn.ac.uk)
Room: CA101; Tel. 01224 272765; office hours by appointment.

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

This guide tells you about the organisation of the course. Please read it carefully and keep it for reference throughout your studies.

1  Dissertation
2  Supervision arrangements
3  Assessment
4  Submission, Format and Presentation
5  The bibliography and footnotes
6  Responsibility for the course
7  Other contacts
8  Student Feedback and Comment

plus  Dissertation cover sheet
1 Dissertation

Students who are admitted to Part III of the MLitt programme are required to submit a dissertation of 18,000 words (NOTE: this count includes foot/endnotes and appendices, but excludes the bibliography). This is an individually supervised project.

2 Supervision Arrangements

The times and arrangements for meetings should be negotiated by mutual consent to meet the needs of the student and supervisor.

It is a requirement of independent study that the researcher takes the initiative to seek advice when appropriate. Accordingly, supervisors are under no obligation to chase up students who fail to make contact.

Unlike the regulations for undergraduate dissertations, which stipulate that supervisors do not look at any drafts, MLitt supervisors are permitted to read a draft introduction and one draft chapter. **However, no draft may be submitted to the supervisor after 30 June.**

3 Assessment

**Basis of assessment:** Good dissertations will be identified by the application of new knowledge, methodology or theory, quality of argument, use of evidence, and relevance to topic and quality of expression. Inaccuracies in punctuation, spelling, grammar, idiom, referencing and bibliography, and sloppiness in presentation (numerous insertions, deletions, coffee stains, incomplete or incorrect bibliographic referencing, etc.) will be penalised by the deduction of marks. Dissertations will be marked using the Common Grading Scale (see the Student Handbook):


**Examination and Moderation:** After the dissertation is submitted to the History Office (CB LG01), it will be double-marked internally. It will then be passed by the dissertation co-ordinator to the external examiner. Internal marking should be completed within a fortnight of the submission deadline and the whole examining process by the middle of October. Please note that all marks are provisional until they have been scrutinised by the external examiner and confirmed by the Board of Examiners.

4 Submission arrangements, Format and Presentation

**TWO** bound copies of the dissertation - one with only your student ID number - must be submitted to the History Office in College Bounds (CB LG01) by **4pm on 17 August 2017.**
NB: Please make sure the name of your supervisor is clearly marked on the cover sheet. Use the cover sheet attached to this guide.

You must also submit ONE official electronic copy (no cover sheet required) through Turnitin via MyAberdeen.

For instructions please see [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/eLearning/turnitinuk/students/](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/eLearning/turnitinuk/students/). You are asked to retain the Turnitin receipt so you 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 Dissertation 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 Dissertation 1.

**Please note:** Failure to submit both an electronic copy to Turnitin and hard copies to the History Office by the stated deadline will result in a zero mark.

N.B Turnitin does not accept Mac documents in Pages. If using a Mac please go to File and export work as a Word document.

The History Office staff will hand the copies on to the dissertation co-ordinator, who will distribute the thesis to the relevant markers.

**NB:** DO NOT hand in your thesis directly to your supervisor.

**Late submission** of work on medical grounds should be accompanied by a medical certificate which must be handed in to the History Office **before the due date** of the assessment. Please contact the dissertation co-ordinator if you have problems with completing the thesis in time. Only medical and other serious emergencies are acceptable.

**Format:** The dissertation should be submitted in A4 word-processed format, double-spaced, and with margins of at least one inch. The dissertation must be bound and pages must be numbered consecutively throughout. The title page must bear the student’s name, ID number, the title of the dissertation and the year of submission. The dissertation must be accompanied by a full bibliography.

**Presentation:** It is inappropriate to be entirely prescriptive about how you should present your dissertation because needs will vary according to individual subjects. However, your work should contain the following:

1. The title page
2. A table of contents
3. Lists of any maps, plans, tables and illustrations (if you have used any)
4. A note on abbreviations (if necessary)
5. An introduction
6. The individual chapters
7. A conclusion
8. Any Appendices (if necessary)
9. A bibliography

You will find useful information on the presentation of dissertations in:
British Standards Institution British Standard Recommendations for the Presentation of theses and dissertations, BS 4821 (1990)

1. Title page
   The title page should bear the student’s name, ID number, the title of the dissertation and the year of submission.

2. Table of contents
   The table of contents needs to be complete and to contain accurate page numbers. If any of the chapters are sub-divided, the sub-divisions need to be listed.

3. Lists of maps, etc.
   Not all dissertations will make use of these, but if they are used, they should be consecutively numbered and the pages on which they appear need to be given.

4. Note on abbreviations
   Standard abbreviations for sources or publications with lengthy titles should be listed on a separate sheet if these abbreviations are used frequently; if the abbreviations are used in just a few notes, the explanation can be included in the first footnote where they occur.

5. Introduction
   It is difficult to be absolutely prescriptive about this, but note that in the introduction you need to outline the subject of the dissertation, assess any previous literature on the subject, discuss the sources you will be using and the methods you will be adopting, and a brief indication of your argument.

6. The individual chapters
   Here the crucial requirement is to strike the right balance. The main part of the dissertation must be divided into manageable chapters which are long enough to present the constituent parts of the dissertation in manageable portions. Individual chapters should never be so lengthy that the reader loses track of the argument, yet they should not be so short that there is insufficient space for a full development. In some cases it may help to sub-divide the chapters, although in others it will be better to have undivided chapters.

7. Conclusion
   The dissertation should end with a section in which your conclusions are given in full. Draw attention to the particular points that you wish to emphasise.

8. Appendices
   It may be more convenient to have appendices for statistical tables, maps, illustrations, cartoons or documents to which repeated references are made. Note that these do count towards the overall word limit.
9. **Bibliography and Footnotes**

See section 5 below.

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### 5 The Bibliography and Footnotes

The bibliography is a list of all the sources that you have used in writing your dissertation. It should be set out in a clear and consistent standardised manner in accordance with some generally recognised scholarly format. It should be divided into sections, either as unpublished and published sources, or in something like the following way:

1. **Primary Sources**
   - Manuscripts
   - Printed material
     - Pamphlets
     - Newspapers
     - Official Publications

2. **Secondary Sources (alphabetical by author’s surname)**

The division between Primary and Secondary is important because every dissertation is expected to make use of some original source material, even if this is in printed form. As a general rule include in your bibliography every item referred to in the text and any other item which may have been of use.

An example of how to organise the Secondary Sources using a table is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title and Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black, J. (ed.)</td>
<td><em>Britain in the Age of Walpole</em> (London 1984)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopkins, B.</td>
<td><em>Glencoe and the End of the Highland War</em> (Edinburgh, 1986)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenman, B.</td>
<td>‘A Client Society: Scotland between the “15 &amp; the ’45”’, in Black (1984), pp...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smout, T.C.</td>
<td>‘The Road to Union’, in Holmes (1969) pp....</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Electronic sources:

(a) item from the World Wide Web

It is vital to give the correct URL (Unique Resource Locator) as this is the only way in which a reader can access the item. Here it is particularly important to check case, spelling and delimiters (colons, dots, and slashes).

Suppose you are using Alex Gibson’s Scottish History Database. 1550-1780 found on the Web at http://www.ex.ac.uk/~ajgibson/scotdata/scot_database_home.html. This will become

Gibson, A. Scottish History Database. 1550-1780. URL: http://www.ex.ac.uk/~ajgibson/scotdata/scot_database_home.html

With Web items there is an indistinct boundary between books and articles, and some items are electronic reprints of primary sources while others can be regarded as free standing authored articles and reviews which can only be found on Web sites. In the case of reprints it is important to state where the original document can be found. Thus Laura Brown’s The Life of the Industrial Worker in 19th Century Britain, is a selection of well known primary documents describing conditions in mines and textile mills reprinted from a 1930 history textbook. In this case the primary document also needs to be indicated. Take, for instance, the document headed ‘The Physical Deterioration of the Textile Workers’, which has been taken from P. Gaskell, pp.161-162, 202-203. You should also have this latter book listed. If the library actually has a copy of the original, which we do in this case, it will be easiest to list this simply as


which is far more manageable than


It is only in those cases where the original is not in the Library that you should give the URL. Be warned that a Web reference is not as permanent as one for a traditional printed publication: URLs can sometimes be changed, and also sites closed down and their material removed from the Web.
If you find articles on JSTOR or in electronic journals, which also appear in print, always quote the original print version (including author, title, journal title, volume, year and full page numbers), just as the article appears on paper. There is no need to give the web location for these items. Do, however, give the web location for e-journals, ie. those that are available only on the web.

(b) cd-rom article
An article about Lenin in the Encarta encyclopaedia 99 edition published by the Microsoft Corporation is difficult to list because in this publication authorship is anonymous, and also Encarta has been updated and revised since the first edition in 1993. Probably the best compromise is:


Footnotes:
There are a number of different styles that can be adopted. A perusal of the historical journals and monographs will reveal many consistent features although in some details individual publications will vary according to the publisher’s house style. Some journals and pamphlets use an abbreviated style in order to save on space which is at a premium, but usually this is not a particularly strong need for a dissertation. It is important to remember that footnotes are only there to allow a reader to see where the evidence has been gathered and, if necessary, allow them to go back over the same ground if they wish to question any part of the dissertation. Therefore, it is vital that footnotes are clear and accurate.

It is a matter of personal choice, and the capabilities of the word processor, whether footnotes appear at the bottom of the page, the end of each chapter, or are gathered together under chapter headings at the very end of the text. There is no doubt that the nearer footnotes are to the text to which they refer the quicker and easier it is for the reader to follow both.

Footnotes at the bottom of the page are the easiest to follow, and this can be done in Word’s INSERT and FOOTNOTE… menu. When the Footnote and Endnote box appears, click on FOOTNOTE at Bottom of page rather than Endnote at End of document. When deciding on the numbering, use AUTONUMBER as it ensures all footnotes will have the same style of font as the text. Please use the Arabic numerals, not Roman numerals.

It is important to make sure any abbreviations in the footnotes are used correctly and consistently. The first footnote in which the title of a work is cited should contain the full title, but a short form of title may be used in any subsequent ones. Standard abbreviations for sources or publications with lengthy titles frequently referred to need to be set out in either the first footnote where they occur or, if there are a number of them, on a separate sheet just before the Introduction. (For this see section 4 above.)

Certain Latin abbreviations like loc. cit. (loco citato, meaning in the passage already quoted) and op. cit. (opere citat, meaning in the work already quoted) are now out of date and should never be used.
You may, however, use ibid. (*ibidem*, meaning in the same book or chapter) and idem (the same author) and passim (to be found in many places scattered throughout this book or other source). Nonetheless, when you cut and paste material, the footnotes can become confused, so it is better to use abbreviated titles instead.

The following examples are presented to illustrate the points made above. The style and conventions are consistent, and where abbreviations have been used they are explained.

Gilian Dawson, in *Citing and Referencing* (July 2005), DISS Fact Sheet FS G110, gives a list of Web sites with suggestions for citation formats. The example from Alex Gibson below is based on the source already referred to on page 3 above.

‘Aberdeen day-labourers’ wages from accounts, 1583-1698’, A. Gibson, *Scottish History Database, 1550-1780*
http://www.ex.ac.uk/~ajgibson/scotdata/wages/aber4.html

These examples come from R. Liddiard. ‘The distribution of ridge and furrow in East Anglia: ploughing practice and subsequent land use’, *Agricultural History Review, 47*, I, pp.1-6.


If you are in any doubt on how best to footnote your dissertation, please consult with your supervisor.

6 Responsibility for the course

The dissertation co-ordinator will try to help you with formal, administrative and organisational queries. Email will usually be the quickest form of contact and sufficient for almost all matters, but appointments can also be arranged. You should, however, direct any queries in the first instance to your dissertation supervisor(s).

7 Other contacts
Your supervisors should be able to help with most if not all queries. For administrative queries, please contact the School Office:

Barbara McGillivray b.mcgillivray@abdn.ac.uk
Gillian Brown gillian.brown@abdn.ac.uk

8 Student Feedback and Comment

The University aims to provide a welcoming and supportive environment for its postgraduate students. However, occasionally students will encounter problems and difficulties. Complaints should be addressed in the first instance to the person who is in charge of the University activity concerned, e.g. the Head of the relevant School about academic matters; the Head of the relevant administrative section about the service that you receive; a Warden about residential matters. Your Programme Coordinator or the Students’ Association will assist you if you are unsure how to pursue a complaint.

Within the School, these are the relevant people to approach with a problem:

♦ Coordinator for Postgraduate Taught Programmes (Dr Beth Lord)
♦ Deputy Head of the School of Divinity, History & Philosophy (Dr Andrew Dilley)
♦ Head of the School of Divinity, History & Philosophy (Prof. John Morrison)

Details of the University’s Policy on Student Appeals and Complaints are available at:

http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/appeals-and-complaints-procedures.php

The Vice-President (Advice & Support) in the Students’ Association is available to help students wishing to make a complaint (tel: +44(0)1224 272965).
School of Divinity, History and Philosophy

MLitt Dissertation Submission Cover Sheet

STUDENT ID NUMBER: _______________________________

DISSERTATION TITLE: _______________________________

FAQ: DISSERTATION COORDINATOR: _______________________________

SUPERVISOR: _______________________________

SUBMISSION DATE: _______________________________

TOTAL WORD COUNT: _______________________________
(including notes and appendices, but excluding bibliography)

HAS AN EXTENSION BEEN GRANTED? ☐
If yes, please ensure grant of extension form is securely attached

YOU ARE REQUESTED TO PERMIT THE SCHOOL TO RETAIN YOUR DISSERTATION INDEFINITELY FOR USE IN FUTURE DISSERTATION PREPARATION CLASSES. IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO GIVE YOUR CONSENT FOR THIS, PLEASE TICK THIS BOX:

☐

PLAGIARISM STATEMENT

“Plagiarism is the use, without adequate acknowledgement, of the intellectual work of another person in work submitted for assessment. A student cannot be found to have committed plagiarism where it can be shown that the student has taken all reasonable care to avoid representing the work of others as his own.”

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and understood the above definition of plagiarism. I declare that all material from other sources used in this piece of assessed work, whether directly quoted or paraphrased, has been clearly identified and attributed to the source from which it came by means of a footnote or endnote reference.

I confirm that the submitted dissertation is my own work.

SIGNATURE: _______________________________

DATE STAMP (office use only)