

**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**

Dr. Frederik Pedersen

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**Discipline Administration:**

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## **TIMETABLE**

For time and place of classes, please see [MyAberdeen](#)

*Students can view their university timetable at*

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/timetables-550.php>

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is designed to give students the confidence to go directly to their manuscript-sources (whatever the dates of those manuscripts), to describe manuscripts, and to transcribe texts. The postgraduate student of mediaeval and early modern history or language or literature often needs to be able to use unedited literary and archival sources and to check the completeness and accuracy of existing editions. Not infrequently, students of mediaeval history need to use texts available only in later copies, extracts, and antiquarian notes: consequently, they should not restrict their palaeographical studies to the period of their general academic study.

## **INTENDED AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

This course aims to introduce postgraduate students to the palaeographical techniques required to read (as a minimum) mediaeval and early modern handwriting, to provide an overview of the development of handwriting in Western Europe, and to teach students how to describe a manuscript.

By the end of this course students should be able to:

- read confidently a variety of archival, documentary and literary texts;
- produce accurate transcripts;
- describe a manuscript in terms of the accepted conventions of palaeography; use these skills to research and write about palaeographically-based questions

## LECTURE/SEMINAR PROGRAMME

### Week 3

Introduction to Palaeography  
(Exploration of what individual students need to learn. Basic definitions)

### Week 4

Conventions of abbreviation

### Week 5

The context of penmanship

### Week 6

Numerals, roman and arabic  
Literary and informal hands

At this point, the class will spend time reading and transcribing documents relevant to their work.

A corollary of this is that the times and places of meetings may have to change. The location is to be confirmed; the times will need to be negotiated.

### Week 7–10

1. Recognition, description, transcription
2. Manuscripts and hands
3. Physical features

## SECONDARY READING

Bernhard Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography*

Michelle P. Brown, *A Guide to Western Historical Scripts from Antiquity to 1600*

Adriano Cappelli, *Dizionario di Abbreviature Latine ed Italiane*

Giles Dawson and Laetitia Kennedy-Skipton, *Elizabethan Handwriting, 1500–1650*

Albert Derolez, *The Palaeography of Gothic Manuscript Books, from the Twelfth to the Early Sixteenth Century*

Peter Godesbrough, *Formulary of Old Scots Legal Documents* (Stair Society, vol. 36)

H.E.P. Grieve, *Examples of English Handwriting, 1150–1750*

L.C. Hector, *The Handwriting of English Documents*

M. B. Parkes, *English Cursive Bookhands, 1250–1500*

Mairi Robinson, *The Concise Scots Dictionary*

A. Rosie, *Scottish Handwriting, 1500–1700*

Karin Schneider, *Paläographie und Handschriftenkunde für Germanisten. Eine Einführung*

Grant G. Simpson, *Scottish Handwriting, 1150–1650*

Jacques Stiennon, *Paléographie du Moyen Age*

S. Harrison Thomson, *Latin Bookhands of the Later Middle Ages, 1100–1500*

### Online help

- [NationalArchives.gov.uk/palaeography](http://NationalArchives.gov.uk/palaeography) provides a web tutorial to reading documents written in English between 1500 and 1800. Includes exercises.
- Postles, D.A., <http://palaeo.anglonorman.org> covers mediaeval charters and sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuscripts. Includes palaeographical exercises.
- [Scottishhandwriting.com](http://Scottishhandwriting.com) offers online tuition in the palaeography of Scottish documents, 1500–1750.

### ASSESSMENT

1. Two Transcription Exercises (20%)
2. One 3,000 word Essay (80%)

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.**

If you submit your work on time, you can expect that feedback will **normally be provided within three working weeks** (excluding vacation periods) of the submission deadline.

## **ESSAYS**

Essays should be 3,000 words long, including quotations and footnotes; students should note that they will be penalised for work which is either too long or too short.

## **EXERCISES (WEEK 3-6)**

Written work (transcribing documents from scanned or photocopied originals) will be required weekly: please hand in two copies of these exercises as outlined below. The hard-copy will be returned at the next seminar. It is important to hand in work on time.

## **LIST OF ESSAY/EXERCISE TOPICS**

Students will choose their own essay-topics in consultation with Dr Pedersen.

## **ASSESSMENT DEADLINES**

Transcription exercises should be handed in on **the Friday of the week following that in which they are set** so that they can be returned one week later.

The essay should be submitted on **Friday 23 November by 3.00pm**.

## **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/students/>)

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 HI501D 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 HI501D 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.***