

## Middle Eastern Studies course descriptions 2020-21

**Current students please note:** Course Outlines are available on the AMES intranet <http://intranet.ames.cam.ac.uk/faculty/students/mes-course-outlines/>

### Part IA (first year)

#### Descriptions

##### **MES.1 and 2 Elementary Arabic Language A and B (Dr Harris and Dr Khalil)**

###### Supplementary Regulation

These two papers are taught as a single course. The aim is to equip students to read and write Modern Standard Arabic, and cover all the basic grammar, and to hold simple conversations in one particular Arabic dialect.

###### Course Description

The course teaches Egyptian Colloquial and Modern Standard Arabic in parallel and in a way where each reinforces the other. The classroom language is Egyptian Colloquial as far as possible, and Modern Standard is used to develop reading and writing skills. The course covers all the basic grammar of both varieties and a broad range of vocabulary, and aims to equip students to reach an upper elementary/lower intermediate level in both, to hold a range of basic conversations with confidence and to understand fairly simple authentic texts with the help of a dictionary. The course uses our own in-house textbook.

###### Lectures and Classes

Taught in Michaelmas, Lent and Easter

Total of 120 language classes and 20 supervisions

###### Form and Conduct

**MES.1:** This paper will contain three questions, all of which must be answered: two passages of Arabic with questions (30 marks each) and one passage of Arabic for translation into English (40 marks).

**MES.2:** This paper consists of two sections: a one-and-a-half hour written examination (50 marks) and an oral examination (50 marks). The written examination will contain one writing task in Arabic from a choice of tasks (30 marks) and a translation from English into Arabic (20 marks).

The oral examination will consist of three sections:

- (a) Listening comprehension (20 marks);
- (b) Liaison interpreting (15 marks);
- (c) Discussion (15 marks). (b) and (c) together: 10 minutes. All timings are approximate and all oral examinations are recorded.

##### **MES.3 Elementary Persian Language (Dr Ghaffari)**

###### Supplementary Regulation

This paper introduces students to Persian grammar and the written and oral use of the language (listening and comprehension practice in the language laboratory). Reading classes expose students to the language in action and to a variety of usages of the grammatical rules.

### Course Description

This course introduces the students to contemporary Persian language through a series of grammar, reading, listening, speaking, and writing exercises.

### Form and Conduct

This paper will consist of two parts: an oral examination (30 marks) and a written paper (70 marks). The written paper will consist of three sections: Section A will contain passages of Persian for translation into English (20 marks), Section B will contain a choice of topics for a composition of approximately 100 words in Persian (20 marks), and Section C will contain questions on Persian grammar (30 marks).

The oral examination will consist of three sections:

- (a) dictation (10 marks);
- (b) a presentation (10 marks); and
- (c) a role play (10 marks).

## **MES.4 Elementary Hebrew Language A (Dr Rand)**

### Supplementary Regulation

In this course students are introduced to the language of the Hebrew Bible. In Michaelmas Term students will concentrate on working through the textbook Introduction to Biblical Hebrew by T. Lambdin. In Lent Term the focus will be on a philologically and linguistically oriented reading of Genesis 1–4 (and possibly related texts) along with the integration of secondary literature dealing with pertinent issues of both a linguistic and non-linguistic nature.

### Essential Preliminaries

As a prerequisite for the course, students are required to have learned the Hebrew alphabet, together with the vowel signs.

### Lectures and Classes

Michaelmas Term: 24 sessions and 8 supervisions; Lent Term: 24 sessions and 8 supervisions; Easter Term: 12 sessions and 4 supervisions.

### Form and Conduct

The paper will consist of two sections. In Section A, question 1 will contain three grammar questions (5 marks each), question 2 will contain a passage of Biblical Hebrew for vocalization (10 marks) and translation into English (10 marks), and question 3 will contain a passage in English for translation into pointed Biblical Hebrew (25 marks). In Section B there will be one question containing two seen passages for translation into English and for comment (20 marks for each passage). All questions must be answered.

## **MES.5 Elementary Hebrew Language B (Dr Kantor, Dr Peleg)**

### Supplementary Regulation

In this course students acquire competence in spoken and written Modern Hebrew. Classes will cover Modern Hebrew grammar and representative texts from Modern Hebrew literature. All students taking this course also take an introductory course on Biblical Hebrew grammar in the Michaelmas and Lent Terms and are required to answer one question on this in the examination.

### Course Description

In this course students acquire competence in spoken and written Hebrew. Classes will cover both Classical and Modern Hebrew grammar and representative texts from Modern

Hebrew literature. All students taking this course also take: 1) Sessions on Biblical Hebrew grammar in the Michaelmas and Lent Terms, on which they are required to answer one question on the examination, 2) Sessions on Modern Hebrew language throughout the year, on which they are required to answer multiple questions on the examination, and 3) Introductory sessions on Modern Hebrew literature in Lent and Easter terms and are required to answer one question on this in the examination.

#### Lectures and Classes

1. Modern Hebrew language: Michaelmas Term: 24 sessions; Lent Term: 16 sessions and 4 supervisions; Easter Term: 8 sessions and 2 supervisions.
2. Modern Hebrew literature sessions are taught in Lent and Easter: Total of 12 participatory lectures and 4 supervisions.

#### Form and Conduct

The paper will consist of five questions, all of which must be answered. There is also a compulsory oral. Question 1 will contain a passage of Biblical Hebrew for vocalization (8 marks) and translation into English (7 marks), question 2 will contain three questions on Modern Hebrew grammar (5 marks each), question 3 will contain one unseen passage for translation into English (15 marks), question 4 will require candidates to write a short composition in Modern Hebrew (15 marks), and question 5 will contain one seen passage for translation into English and for comment (15 marks: 8 for translation and 7 for comment).

The oral (25 marks) will consist of three sections:

- (a) Listening comprehension test (5 marks);
- (b) Reading comprehension test (10 marks);
- (c) Conversation test (10 marks).

### **MES.6 Introduction to the history and culture of the Middle East (Dr Ashraf et al)**

#### Supplementary Regulation

This paper provides an introduction to the history of the Middle East and the political, religious, and cultural developments of the different regions and periods. It aims to familiarize the student with the sources of information available and with the main themes that will arise in studying Middle Eastern societies in subsequent years of the Tripos.

#### Course Description

This paper provides an introduction to the history of the Middle East, with the emergence of Islam being its focal point. Within this framework, it surveys some of the relevant religious and politico-cultural developments of its different regions over time, aiming to introduce the student to the academic study of the Middle East at university level, as well as to the sources and the main themes that will arise in studying Middle Eastern societies in subsequent years of the Tripos. The course consists primarily of lectures and writing assignments.

#### Lectures and Classes

Taught in Michaelmas, Lent, and Easter.

Total of 18 participatory lectures and 5 supervisions.

#### Form and Conduct

This paper will consist of eight essay questions of which candidates will be required to answer three. All questions will carry equal marks.

## **MES.7 Introduction to the contemporary Middle East: Languages and Literatures of the Modern Middle East (Dr Anderson et al)**

### Supplementary Regulation

This paper provides a critical introduction to the languages, cultures, and literatures of the Middle East.

### Course Description

This paper provides an introduction to the histories, literatures and languages of contemporary Middle Eastern societies, giving students a broad overview of the academic study of the subject at university level, including sources and themes that will arise in subsequent years of the Tripos. The course is team-taught by members of the faculty of the ME Studies Department, who will deliver participatory lectures on their field of expertise. Michaelmas term is dedicated to participatory lectures on history, looking at changes to the region in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, while Lent term will incorporate study of Hebrew, Arabic and Persian literature, language and anthropology.

### Lectures and Classes

Taught in Michaelmas, Lent and Easter.

Total of 18 participatory lectures and 5 supervisions.

### Form and Conduct

This paper will consist of eight essay questions of which candidates must answer three. All questions will carry equal marks.

## **Courses borrowed from other Faculties**

### **X.1 Akkadian language I (Paper M1 of Part I of the Archaeology Tripos)**

For details, consult the Department of Archaeology.

### **X.2 Egyptian language I (Paper E1 of Part I of the Archaeology Tripos)**

For details, consult the Department of Archaeology.