

Author/genre exam

Aims and objectives

This exam offers the opportunity to study an ancient author or genre in considerable depth. Its objectives are that the candidate deepen his or her knowledge of an author/genre and of relevant scholarship in the field, and learn to assess and form critical responses to the material.

The candidate should discuss topics with the Chair of their committee. Normally the author/genre chosen should be in the language of the candidate's dissertation topic. However, there may be exceptions to this rule for good intellectual reasons (e.g. a student whose thesis is on an ancient Greek novel might benefit from doing the author/genre paper on a Latin novel or on the genre as a whole, encompassing texts in both languages).

Scope and structure of the examination

Expectations normally include some or all of the following: a good knowledge of the primary texts, relevant scholarship and current critical issues; evidence of wide and intellectually demanding reading; evidence of independent thinking, often manifesting itself in the ability to assess the scholarship in the field and ask significant questions about the material; clear writing.

The exam will be three hours in length: the precise content to be determined by the Chair of the committee, in consultation with the other committee members, who will make it clear to the candidate, at least one month before the exam is taken, what format the exam will take. It may include (but is not limited to): gobbets from the original language for comment and analysis (though NOT translation), questions about the manuscript tradition, exercises on textual criticism. At least one exercise should test that the candidate has read the text(s) in the original language (eg a 'gobbet' exercise). Exam questions should be submitted to the Graduate Advisor at least one week before the exam is scheduled to allow the Graduate Committee to ensure a broad parity of difficulty level for all candidates.