



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

CENTRE OF AFRICAN STUDIES

**MPHIL IN AFRICAN STUDIES
PROSPECTUS 2010-11**



Centre of African Studies
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1. Introduction: African Studies at Cambridge

The Centre of African Studies was established in 1965 by path-breaking anthropologist Dr Audrey Richards. The Centre supports teaching on Africa at the University of Cambridge through its library and through its seminar series. It also acts as a platform for interdisciplinary research, bringing the University's Africanists together with scholars from African, American, and European universities. Alongside a part-time Director, the Centre's staff consists of an Administrator, a Librarian, and the holder of the three-year-long Smuts Research Fellowship in African Studies. The Centre's 40,000 volume Africana library attracts a steady flow of undergraduate and graduate students. So does the Centre's Research Seminar Series, which takes place during Michaelmas and Lent terms of every academic year. The Centre each year hosts a number of visiting scholars, including a group of five Visiting Fellows from African universities who come to the Centre for six months of coordinated research.

2. The MPhil in African Studies

The MPhil in African Studies is a postgraduate course with a substantial research component, which runs for nine months covering the three terms (Michaelmas, Lent and Easter) of the Cambridge Academic Year. It is designed both for students who want to enhance their understanding of the social, cultural, political and economic history and present condition of Africa and for those who want to go on to further primary research. It provides intensive research and language training for those who wish to go on to prepare a doctoral dissertation, but it is also a freestanding postgraduate degree course in its own right. The MPhil is associated for administrative purposes with the Faculty of History. But teaching and learning for the course also takes place in the Centre of African Studies and the various humanities and social science faculties and departments

The MPhil aims to introduce students to the latest research topics, methods and debates in African Studies at an advanced level. It provides training in the use of printed, manuscript and other sources relevant to African history. It provides essential language training. It offers training in the advanced use of library and archival facilities and the appropriate use of electronic databases for the location, identification and evaluation of source materials. It provides a structured introduction to key debates in African history, geography, politics and the humanities. Finally, it offers close supervision in undertaking an original research project.

3. The Academic Timetable

The academic year in Cambridge is divided into three terms. In 2010-11 the relevant dates are as follows:

MICHAELMAS FULL TERM:	5 October	-	3 December
LENT FULL TERM:	18 January	-	18 March
EASTER FULL TERM:	26 April	-	17 June

During the Christmas and Easter Vacations lectures, classes and supervision are suspended and undergraduates are not in residence. Graduate students on courses such as this one,

however, are required to remain in residence continuously throughout the academical year, and are expected to work during the Christmas and Easter vacations (apart possibly from short breaks). Dissertations are due for submission at the end of the Easter Term.

4. Facilities

(i) Library Resources

One of the major advantages of being at Cambridge is the superb range and variety of library resources available to students. There are over one hundred libraries in the university system so finding books or periodicals in any historical field is rarely a problem. The University Library is one of the finest research libraries in the world, being entitled under legal deposit regulations to a copy of every book published in Great Britain and Ireland (including American books with a British imprint). A huge number of foreign books and periodicals are also acquired by purchase. From its stock of about 8,000,000 volumes and over 127,000 manuscripts and 860,000 microforms it is able to supply the needs of most graduate students. The Library's rare books collection is particularly fine and there is a very rich collection of medieval manuscripts. The Official Publications section receives material not only from Parliament and all branches of government, but from the former British government of India. The former library of the Royal Commonwealth Society is also housed within the University Library. Most of the post-1850 book collection is on open access and the Library permits graduate students to borrow up to ten books or bound periodical volumes at a time.

The University Library also networks thousands of electronic databases and journals, including hundreds of history resources, which can be accessed from Faculty and College PCs across Cambridge.

The Centre of African Studies' library has a stock of over 30,000 books. A high priority is placed on obtaining material published in Africa and thus a substantial percentage of the titles held are not available elsewhere in Cambridge. This policy also applies to periodicals. The Library has a good collection of bibliographies on Africa. Key serial publications held include African Studies Abstracts and International African Bibliography. The library's collection also includes access to a large number of African television programmes, CD-ROMs and CDs, microfilms of African newspapers and other documents and an archive of primary sources, the full catalogue of which can be found on the Centre's website www.african.cam.ac.uk

The History Faculty's Seeley Library is primarily an undergraduate resource. However, it is well stocked with essential texts on African Studies and a wide range of periodicals and provides a useful complement to the University Library. In term time it is open every day except Sunday and is only five minutes walk away from the University Library and ten minutes walk, or less, from the majority of the Colleges. Most books can be borrowed overnight or over the weekend and graduates may have three items on loan. Graduates may often find themselves using other specialized Faculty and Departmental libraries, some of them conveniently located on the Sidgwick Site. The Marshall Library of Economics, the Squire Law Library and the library of the Faculty of Politics and International Studies are among those that permit borrowing by graduate students registered on the African Studies M. Phil. There are also libraries in each of the Colleges and, although these are primarily intended for undergraduate use, some have important holdings of rare books and manuscripts relevant to specific fields of study.

The Fitzwilliam Museum offers a magnificent array of artefacts as well as manuscript and rare book collections. The catalogues of all these Faculty, Departmental, College and special libraries are increasingly integrated and available for online searching through the University's computer network. Cambridge also offers easy access to research centres in London which is less than an hour away by train. Cambridge PhD students are regular visitors to the British Library at St Pancras (which includes the Asian and African reading room), the National Archives at Kew and the British Library of Political and Economic Science at the London School of Economics and have the right to use the excellent library and bibliographical facilities of the Institute for Historical Research of the University of London, located in the Senate House.

(ii) Computing Facilities

For students without their own laptops computing facilities will be provided by the Centre. The Centre offers each MPhil student a free printing allowance of 1500 pages for the whole course.

The Computer Laboratory offers the use of a large number of PCs and Apple Macintoshes located at several large Public Workstation Facilities (PWF) throughout the University's Departments and Colleges. At the PWF sites laser printers are available as a pay facility, as well as scanners and other specialised equipment at various locations. The nearest Public Workstation Facility is in the Seeley Library, where there are 12 workstations.

Most Colleges also offer convenient word-processing and printing facilities to their own students. Cheap laser printing and photocopying services are available at the offices of the Graduate Union.

All graduate students are given an e-mail address (ending in @cam.ac.uk) by the University Computing Service. This is accessible in a number of different ways, from any computer with a network connection. For more information on Computing facilities in the Faculty, or across the University, please see the History General Graduate Handbook and the University of Cambridge Computing Service website (<http://www.cam.ac.uk/cs/>).

5. Coursework Requirements

Assessed coursework will consist of one core course, taken by all students, and one disciplinary seminar selected by each student from the range offered as part of the MPhil. The core course will consist of twelve weeks of lectures or seminars, outlined below, which will take place during the Michaelmas Term and the first half of the Lent Term. The language element of the degree will run throughout the year, while the disciplinary seminar will be taught during the sixteen weeks of Michaelmas and Lent Terms, the format varying according to what individual teachers consider most appropriate.

(a) Core Course

The course aims to introduce students to a number of theoretical and methodological issues in African Studies, whilst at the same time conveying substantive information on the history, culture and politics of Africa. It will be taught in the Michaelmas and Lent terms through weekly two-hour classes, with readings set in advance. Visual material (including film) and fictional works will be set alongside academic literature.

Week 1: Africa in the long duree: methodologies

This class focuses on the importance of understanding something of Africa's deeper past and longer cultural history, and the methodological challenges involved in that. For example, discussion of the work of David Schoenbrun on linguistic evidence, debates on oral historical methodologies and uses of art history and the politics of recent work on DNA and the tracing of African ancestry.

Week 2: People, politics and power in pre-colonial Africa

In this class we will focus on debates on the nature of the state in precolonial Africa, of power relations and social organisation. This would include a discussion of the theory that precolonial Africa was a 'labour-constrained' continent, the character of labour regimes and domestic slavery, the relationship between gender, generation and power.

Week 3: Colonialism: from Marx to Foucault and beyond

This class focuses on the place of colonialism in the history and historiography of Africa. In the light of revisionist work on empire, and new work on African history which stresses African 'agency', how do we assess the impact of colonialism? This class would include comparative reading, placing the work on Africa alongside that on other parts of the colonial world, particularly South Asia.

Week 4: God, gods, missionaries and their African translators

To what extent have Christianity and Islam both become 'African' religions? This class examines the rich literature on the history of these two world religions in Africa and their relationship to pre-existing cosmologies and systems of thought. The class also examines the politics of religion in colonial and postcolonial Africa.

Week 5: From colonialism to postcolonialism

This class examines the debates over the nature of the colonial state and the extent to which the postcolonial politics of Africa can be seen as a legacy of the colonial period. Are African states simply predatory on their people, and why should we worry if they fall apart? What has been the impact of structural adjustment and political 're-democratisation' in Africa, and to what extent have African political solutions been formulated from within or beyond the continent? Why should we think in terms of 'African politics' at all?

Week 6: Poverty and wealth in contemporary Africa

Why are so many people in Africa still so poor? This class examines debates over the nature of poverty in Africa, addressing its longer history as well as the impact of colonial and post-colonial policies. But the other side of poverty is wealth. What are the historical patterns of wealth creation in Africa? Is Fred Cooper right in his analysis of 'gatekeeper states' as a cause of long-term poverty in Africa? What are the prospects for economic growth and wealth distribution in the future?

Week 7: Aid, development, power and knowledge

Examines the history of development interventions in Africa from the post-war period to the present day. Has international aid benefited the people of Africa, or disempowered them? Are development ideologies to be viewed as anything more than vehicles for neo-colonialism, and what role have NGOs played in African politics?

Week 8: Conflict in postcolonial Africa: Cold War, diamonds and genocide

Why has conflict been so conspicuous a feature of Africa's postcolonial politics? In this class we examine the different factors behind conflicts and civil wars, including Cold War politics, the role of competition for natural resources in fuelling conflict, the nature of ethnic and religious divisions within African nations and the manipulation of 'youth'. Are we right to think of Africa as 'conflict-ridden'? What can be concluded from the histories of states in which little or no conflict has occurred? What can we learn from an examination of the new cultures and technologies of war in Africa?

Week 9: Population, environment and climate change

In this class students will examine debates on the changing natural environments of Africa including those on environmental degradation, population growth and distribution, the impact of 'green revolution' technologies, competition over resources, gender and the environment, and the impact of structural adjustment policies on the distribution of natural resources such as water. What has been the impact both of 'climate change' of and the international politics of climate change on Africa?

Week 10: The African city and its hinterlands

Rapid urbanisation has been a marked feature of contemporary Africa. Here we shall investigate the kinds of urban cultures that have been created in Africa and to what extent politics in Africa is driven by their urban populations. Will, for example, the extension of new technologies and 'globalized' media into the rural areas of Africa effectively erode any assumed rural/urban divide? We shall use two case studies, Kinshasa and Dar-es-Salaam, to explore these issues in more depth.

Week 11: South Africa after apartheid

Here we shall examine the legacy of apartheid and of the histories of struggle and negotiation with that regime. We shall investigate what kind of society has emerged in post-apartheid South Africa, and the role that South Africa is playing in the politics and economic development of the southern African region, and whether or not an analysis of present-day South Africa indicates that 'race' is less important than class in the country's history?

Week 12: Sex, gender, medicine and power: HIV/AIDS

Traces the twenty-year history of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa. Students will examine the debates around the nature of African sexualities and gender relations and their role in understanding the course of the epidemic, as well as the longer-term history of disease and medical interventions in Africa. The seminar will also trace the politics of AIDS, patient activism, the creation of new forms of 'therapeutic citizenship' and the long-term impacts of HIV/AIDS.

(b) Language Training

All students on the course will be required to attend and participate in bi-weekly classes in an African language. Language teachers will require students to regularly prepare written work, which will aid them in their acquisition of the language. Tuition will be offered in Swahili; other languages may be arranged at the discretion of the course administrator.

(c) Disciplinary seminars

Throughout the Michaelmas and Lent Terms, students will be required to attend and participate in one of several discipline-specific graduate seminars relating to Africa. The choices at present are listed below, but they may vary according to the Faculties' changing teaching programme:

1. The African History Group (Faculty of History)
2. The African Politics Seminar (Department of Politics and International Studies)

3. The 'Political ecology of rural resources' seminar (Department of Geography)
4. The International Literature seminar (Faculty of English)
5. The Anthropology of Africa (Department of Social Anthropology)

Satisfactory attendance in these seminars will mean that no more than one session has been missed without evidence of good cause.

(d) Additional Lectures on 'The history of Africa since 1800'

Students taking the MPhil in African Studies will be able, if they wish, to attend the lectures for the History Faculty's course on 'The history of Africa since 1800'. This class meets twice weekly.

6. The Dissertation

During the fourth week of Michaelmas term, students will plan a dissertation proposal in consultation with a designated supervisor. It should include a literature review, a set of research questions, and a statement on methodology. Dissertation proposals will be approved at a meeting of the Centre's MPhil. Committee by the end of Michaelmas Term. During the Christmas holiday and throughout Lent and Easter terms, students will research and write their dissertation, in regular consultation with their supervisor. The dissertation will be 15,000 words in length, inclusive of notes, but not of bibliography.

7. Assessment

Assessment consists of two parts: coursework essays and a dissertation.

In week six of Lent Term, students will submit a 5,000 word essay based on material covered in the core course. Questions will be distributed in week five of Lent term. On the last day of Lent Term, students will submit a 5,000 word essay written in response to questions distributed in week four. Questions will concern material covered in the disciplinary seminar.

On the last Friday of Easter full term, students will submit a 15,000 word dissertation (inclusive of notes but exclusive of bibliography). All dissertations will be read by two examiners other than the supervisor. Exam scripts and long essays (which will be anonymized) will be marked by two examiners. The dissertation will count for 70% of the final mark. The two 5,000 word essays will each count for 15 percent of the final mark.

The marking scheme for coursework and dissertations will be the same as in other MPhil degree courses in the History Faculty. Both coursework and dissertations will be double-marked. The supervisor cannot act as an examiner. Essays and dissertations will be classed according to a scale comprising Distinction, Pass, Marginal Fail and Fail based on the following numerical points: 75% and above – Distinction; 60% to 69% - Pass; 59% - Marginal Fail; 58% and below – Fail.

If the examiners consider it necessary, they may conduct an oral examination on the MPhil essays or dissertation.

All parts of the MPhil assessment must be passed in order for the degree to be obtained.

8. Supervision

A supervisor will be appointed for each student at the beginning of the course and will guide the student's programme of study as a regular advisor for the entire year as well as advising on all aspects of the MPhil dissertation. The supervisor will have expertise in an area close to that defined as the dissertation field in the student's application. The Faculty will not accept candidates who wish to write dissertations on subjects for which no supervisor is available in Cambridge University.

The supervisor's role is to help students clarify and develop their own ideas, not impose his or her own interests on the subject. Students should not expect to be 'spoon-fed' by their supervisors. Graduate students in Cambridge are expected to have the capacity and enthusiasm for organizing their own research and working largely on their own initiative. The frequency of meeting between students and their supervisors is a matter for mutual agreement and will vary according to the stage of the dissertation work and an individual's particular needs.

Professor Megan Vaughan is the course convenor. Please refer to the African Studies website for a list of Supervisors <http://www.african.cam.ac.uk/studying.htm> - follow the link and the bottom of the page.

9. Admissions Criteria

(i) Minimum Entry Requirements

Applications are welcome from British, EU and overseas graduate students. Minimum qualifications are: a good 2:1 Class Honours degree and a good command of English. The Faculty, however, regards an Upper 2:1 or First (or equivalent) as essential for the MPhil in African Studies. All candidates for admission to the course are expected to be of PhD potential.

Candidates with degrees from UK universities will be asked to achieve a high 2:1 class degree as a minimum. The Centre will normally only consider applications with an average of 67 or above for admission to the MPhil.

It is not possible to lay down fixed standards for overseas applicants (although the notes below offer some rough guidelines) but candidates will normally be expected to have degree results in at least the top quarter of their graduating cohort at their previous university.

It should be emphasized, though, that the Cambridge entry system is a flexible one. The Faculty does not follow mechanical rules in judging applicants; instead it considers for each individual applicant, the level of the academic achievement, the research proposal, academic references and personal writing samples to look for evidence of ability to carry out and present a research project of a high standard.

The following are some rough, 'rule-of-thumb' standards, formulated over the years:

- US and Canadian students are required to submit an up-to-date transcript of their course marks and normally expected to have a cumulative GPA of 3.7 or better.

- German students should have their Grundstudium completed (with a 1.5 mark or better in the relevant subjects) as a minimum requirement, but the course is better suited to those who have finished their entire Hochschulstudium.
- The equivalent requirement from Holland is a doctoraal and from Belgium a licentia(a)t (both with distinction).
- Italian students will be expected to have the laurea (cum laude grade) and Spanish students the licenciatura.
- French students may apply after having received their maitrise, or after passing the DEA
- Israeli students are expected to have a BA with a grade of 90% or higher, and preferably an MA degree.
- Candidates from Commonwealth (or former Commonwealth) countries which follow the British system should have achieved at least a good 2:1 or equivalent.
- Candidates from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and most countries of South Asia should have a first-class masters degree from a good university.
- Candidates from China should have a first degree with a grade of at least 85% from a recognized and competitive university.

It is hoped that for candidates from other countries the foregoing examples provide sufficient guidance for establishing equivalent degree and grade requirements.

(ii) Additional Entry Requirements - for those applicants whose native language is not English

Applicants who are not native speakers in English must have a fluent command of the English language. Normally, all applicants must prove that they have passed one of the required language proficiency examinations. Foreign applicants who believe that this requirement should be waived for them, because they already read, write and speak English at a near native level, should make this case in their application or at the time they receive their conditional offer.

The Board of Graduate Studies prefers the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Test available through the British Council. This is a single battery of tests. In the ELTS (English Language Testing Service) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System) examinations the minimum requirement is an overall band score of 7.0 with no individual element of the test scoring below 6.5.

TOEFL tests should only be undertaken if IELTS tests are not available. The minimum overall score normally required from those who are tested by the American TOEFL system is 600, plus a satisfactory result in the TOEFL Test of Written English (for further details see the Graduate Studies Prospectus). The Princeton TOEFL test must be taken with the Test of Written English at the same time. If you took a language test several years ago and have not been working or studying in English since you may be asked to provide more recent test results. The Board of Graduate Studies is advised that scores on English Language Tests are a reliable indicator of proficiency for about 2 years.

In cases of doubt, a telephone interview may be required between the prospective supervisor and the applicant.

10. Admission Process and applying for funding

(i) The Admission process

- It takes anywhere from 6 weeks to 12 weeks (sometimes longer) for the Centre to process a **complete** admission application.
- It is your responsibility to make sure the admission application you submit is complete.
- Incomplete admission applications (ie those missing references, proposals, writing samples) will not be processed until they are complete.
- If you submit an incomplete application by the admission deadline, it is your responsibility to make sure that all missing documents are supplied within 7-10 days following the deadline (they can be faxed [01223 769329] or scanned & emailed afrenq@hermes.cam.ac.uk)
- The Centre **welcomes and encourages early admission applications where, and as soon as, possible**: it is in your best interests.
- **For all courses, if you want to apply for funding, your admission application MUST be received, by the Centre, by:**
15 October 2009 (all non-UK nationality applicants)
OR 15 December 2009 (all UK nationality applicants)
Applications sent in after these dates, may not be considered for funding but will be processed for admission

For advice on funding please consult the Faculty of History website:
<http://www.hist.cam.ac.uk/pgadmissions/funding/index.html>

If you want to apply for admission only, your admission application MUST be received, by the Centre, by 30 June 2010.

11. Admission Procedures

Admission to the MPhil programme is by application to the Board of Graduate Studies of the University. The Board's general admissions procedures apply. The Board of Graduate Studies website <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/gspectus/> offers the facility to download a Graduate application form, Graduate Studies Prospectus, or to request a paper copy of these documents. It also provides other information about graduate studies at Cambridge including a list of frequently asked questions, and answers.

PLEASE NOTE THAT WE REQUIRE ALL CANDIDATES TO SEND COPIES OF THE GRADUATE ADMISSION AND SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORM (GRADSAF) + THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS LISTED BELOW TO THE CENTRE OF AFRICAN STUDIES, at the same time and in addition to THE APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION THAT IS SENT TO THE BOARD OF GRADUATE STUDIES, as follows:

- (a) **THREE PAPER COPIES** of the Graduate Admission and Scholarship Application Form (GRADSAF) and **THREE PAPER COPIES** of the supporting documentation listed below must be sent to the Centre of African Studies, MPhil Office, The Mond Building, Free School Lane, Cambridge, CB2 3RF, England.
- (b) **TWO** copies of the GRADSAF (**THREE**, if from outside the UK) must be sent to the Board of Graduate Studies, PO Box 338, Cambridge, CB2 1YP (tel. 01223 – 760606).

You may download the graduate application pack from the web OR you can use the Board of Graduate Studies' online application facility. **If making an online application, you MUST SEND ALL SUPPORTING PAPER DOCUMENTATION** (e.g. references, writing sample, etc.) **AT THE SAME TIME** to the Board of Graduate Studies. The following link will take you to the relevant web address: <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/gspectus/applying/>

PLEASE NOTE that although the Board of Graduate Studies can accept electronic applications via CAMSIS, the Centre of African Studies cannot. You will therefore need to forward copies of your on-line application to the Centre of African Studies.

It is imperative that the copies of the GRADSAF are SENT TO THE CORRECT ADDRESS BY THE DEADLINES STATED AT THE BACK OF THIS PROSPECTUS. The application process followed by the Centre of African Studies and the Board of Graduate Studies operates in parallel – whilst the Board of Graduate Studies scrutinises the application to ensure that all University regulatory requirements are met, the Centre processes the additional copies of the application to determine whether the applicant is academically suited for the course in question. The two processes are then combined in order to determine whether the applicant is offered admission to the University of Cambridge. **It is therefore essential that all copies of the GRADSAF that are submitted to the Centre and the Board of Graduate Studies are complete (i.e. have references, writing samples, research proposals etc enclosed with them).**

Filling in the form: The form is for the most part self-explanatory.

Section A(3): Programme of study or research area should be filled out as follows:

- i) Your 'Course Code' is HSASM1
- ii) Your 'Programme of Study or research area' is 'MPhil in African Studies in the first instance';
- iii) The 'Department' is History;
- iv) 'Final Award' is MPhil;
- v) 'Duration' is nine months.

Please note that you should enter 'MPhil in the first instance' even if you intend to proceed to a PhD.

Section A(12): in this section please provide a concise provisional title giving the subject of your research, in addition to attaching your full research proposal as a separate document.

In addition to the Graduate Application Form, candidates will be expected to provide the following compulsory material, as appropriate:

(i) Statement of Intended Research

The application form provides relatively little space for the candidate to explain his or her research topic for the MPhil. **Please note that the Centre of African Studies insists that all applicants must provide a longer and more carefully argued statement of research intent on a separate page.** The statement of planned research, in effect a first proposal for the student's MPhil dissertation topic, *must* be a **detailed statement of 600-1,000 words (2-5 pages) in length.** It should clearly outline the area and parameters of the proposed dissertation topic. **Candidates should take care that the scope and/or chronological range of their proposal is not too broad to be unviable within a nine-month course of study.** In addition, candidates should submit a **clear short title** for the proposed research topic. Candidates may, if they wish, indicate a particular member of the University by whom they would like to be supervised, although no guarantee can be provided that the person in question will be available.

It must be emphasized that the detailed research proposal is an essential part of the application. Candidates are urged to consult their advisor at their own university during the process of preparing it.

(ii) Writing Sample

In order to help the Centre to judge the ability of applicants, at least one sample of *written work* must be included with all applications. The writing sample must be no longer than 8,000 words in length. The piece can be an undergraduate essay, or part of an undergraduate or graduate (MA or MPhil) dissertation. In the case of European candidates a chapter of the *laurea*, or the *memoire* submitted for the *maitrise* or DEA, or the appropriate national equivalent, might be appropriate for this purpose. If no suitable written work is available from the candidate's previous university study, an essay written specially for the Cambridge application is acceptable (but, if this is the case it needs to be clearly indicated). All work must be submitted *in English*. Candidates must declare that the sample piece submitted with their application is substantially their own work.

(iii) Transcripts

Copies of degree certificates and, transcripts of grades must be supplied with the application. If transcripts are unavailable at the time of application they should be forwarded as a matter of urgency as soon as possible.

Please remember to request a copy of your transcript of your results from your University as early as possible – overseas universities can take some time to produce transcripts. Please also remember when enclosing/requesting overseas transcripts, that the Board of Graduate Studies requires the **inclusion of an official explanation of the mark scheme used.**

(iv) Academic References

You must arrange for two references in support of your application to be sent to the Board of Graduate Studies and, **at the same time**, direct to the Centre of African Studies. You will find full instructions about this, and the submission of other documents, in the Graduate Studies Prospectus.

(v) Personal Development Questionnaire

In order to help the Faculty to assess the generic and ancillary skills and training you have already gained and those required for your proposed research, please complete the questionnaire at the back of this booklet and submit it with your application to the Centre.

Candidates should note that failure to follow instructions in submitting their applications may put them at a serious disadvantage. To help ensure that your application is complete, a checklist of requirements is given on page 18. You are strongly encouraged to consult this checklist before you send off your application.

On receipt of complete applications, the Sub-Committee for the MPhil in African Studies considers the case for admission on academic grounds. The result of its decision is communicated to the Board of Graduate Studies, which informs applicants about the result of their application in writing.

The Centre of African Studies aims to process all applications as quickly as possible after they have been received. However, candidates should be aware that because of the complexities of the Cambridge admissions system involving the Board of Graduate Studies, a significant period of time may elapse before candidates receive the result of their application in writing. Candidates may be given an informal indication of the academic decision before the formal letter from the Board of Graduate Studies is released, but the Centre cannot anticipate the formal notification from the Board of Graduate Studies in any other way.

If an application is accepted by the Centre, the Board of Graduate Studies will write to applicants setting out the conditions (financial, degree results, etc.) upon which admission is offered. Admission is confirmed only on the receipt of the required documentary evidence that all conditions specified have been met. Candidates are advised to submit any such evidence as soon as possible in order to secure their place on the course. At the same time, applications endorsed by the University are sent by the Board of Graduate Studies to the Colleges. These aim to complete their consideration of applications by 1 July, although the great majority of offers are processed much earlier.

Once the evidence concerning the fulfilment of entrance conditions is received and a College place has been secured, the offer of a University place is finally confirmed. Those who wish to withdraw their applications or find that they cannot meet the conditions attached to the offer are requested to inform the MPhil Sub-Committee and the Board of Graduate Studies at once.

All those accepted, whether conditionally or unconditionally, will be told immediately the name of the person appointed to be their Supervisor, whose task it will be to guide them through their studies. Students are encouraged to correspond with their supervisors in the run-up to their arrival in Cambridge, so that they can get straight down to work on their research project.

Please read through carefully the Board of Graduate Studies Prospectus and the African Studies Prospectus *before* you send off your application for admission.

12. Cambridge Colleges

When you apply for a place on the course, you will also be asked to put down the names of three Colleges for which you would like to be considered, in order of preference. No student may be admitted to the course without being accepted by a College. Information about Colleges may be accessed through their individual websites. Many Colleges are co-residential for men and women, but three are for women only (Lucy Cavendish, New Hall,

Newnham). Some Colleges admit only graduates; most admit both undergraduates and graduates. Their main role, as far as graduate students is concerned, is to look after their members' general welfare including, as far as possible, the provision of accommodation, meals and other amenities. Some Colleges provide travel and book grants, or scholarships (open to competition). Many Colleges also have substantial libraries, some of which have important collections of manuscripts and rare books. Students do not have to be in the same College as their supervisor, nor is it necessary to choose a College according to the proposed field of study, since Colleges are multi-disciplinary institutions. Although applications will be sent first to the College preferred by the candidate, most places are awarded through an inter-Collegiate distribution system. There is considerable pressure on College places, and applicants are advised to accept whatever College place may be offered.

13. Fees and Financial Support

The MPhil in African Studies comes under the fee registration of *nine months* graduate courses of tuition at the University of Cambridge (there is a separate fee structure for UK and European Union students and for 'overseas' students from all other countries). Applicants should ensure that they have adequate financial provisions in place not only to cover College and University fees, but also to cover the cost of any necessary travel for research purposes.

Before an applicant's admission can be finally confirmed, he or she needs to prove the ability to meet University and College tuition fees and living expenses in Cambridge. The sum which is deemed to be sufficient for a nine-month stay in Cambridge (not including travel expenses) is specified by the University year by year; the precise details are available in the current University Graduate Studies Prospectus, available on the web at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/gsprospectus/>. Prospective applicants should note that the MPhil requires full-time study, and students are not allowed to take any employment, even part-time, while fulfilling their course requirements. In any case, employment opportunities are scarce in Cambridge, and within the University there is normally no possibility for MPhil students to find employment as teaching or research assistants.

For advice on funding please consult the Faculty of History website: <http://www.hist.cam.ac.uk/pgadmissions/funding/index.html>

14. Continuing to the PhD Programme

The MPhil is a freestanding degree, but it is expected that many candidates, because of the significant research-training component of the course, will proceed thereafter to pursue the PhD. The course offers a thorough preparation for doctoral research, through the historiographical and conceptual emphasis of the taught component, through the specialist options, and through the dissertation.

All MPhil students who wish to continue to a PhD should seek guidance during the course of their MPhil. Most Faculties provide literature on this matter, and supervisors should be able to offer specific advice.

Students who are considering applying to continue to the PhD should be aware that the PhD course in Cambridge is a demanding one. There are no specific course requirements and the

PhD is entirely by individual supervision. From the beginning of the course, the student's entire effort focuses on the writing of the dissertation (of a maximum length of 80,000 words). Candidates are expected to complete their thesis by the end of their third PhD year (and definitely not later than in their fourth year).

The MPhil course is designed to provide an excellent basis for students who intend to continue with work towards the PhD degree either in Cambridge or at some other university. It is helpful if those who plan to continue with further graduate education after their MPhil year, whether in Cambridge or elsewhere, indicate their intentions clearly and provide, in addition to the outline of their planned MPhil work, a statement setting out in broad outline the expected direction of their PhD research.

15. Deferrals and Withdrawals

Applicants who have received an offer of admission to the MPhil may occasionally wish to postpone their course entry for one year. The notes below are intended to provide you with advice on how to apply for such a postponement.

If, by September/October, you find that you are unable to pursue your studies toward the MPhil degree, there is the option of postponing your application for admission for up to one year. However, please note that only your application for admission will be postponed. Funding applications cannot be deferred and have to be made annually.

In order to apply for postponement of your course, please do the following:

1. Write a letter, detailing your reasons, to the Board of Graduate Studies (4 Mill Lane, Cambridge, CB2 1RZ AND SEND A COPY to: MPhil Office, Centre of African Studies, The Mond Building, Free School Lane, Cambridge, CB2 3RF) as quickly as possible;
2. You will receive a standard letter from the Board of Graduate Studies informing you that your original admission application has been re-submitted to the Centre for consideration - you do not need to complete further admission application forms unless the Faculty informs you otherwise;
3. As soon as practically possible, the Centre will contact you by email to let you know informally whether postponement of course has been agreed or not;
4. In the meantime, please can you regularly check the History Faculty's website (Graduate Students section) for the latest appropriate Funding Guide - please note the Guides are revised annually and you should check this webpage regularly;
5. The Centre requires Funding Advance Notification Forms (found at the end of the Faculty's MPhil Funding Guide booklet) as quickly as possible and as early as possible for the appropriate year you intend to apply for funding. The Funding Advance Notification Form will specify the exact deadlines. Additional information will be sent to you by the Centre only when it receives the Funding Advance Notification Form.
6. Funding Advance Notification Forms must be completed and sent to the Centre of African Studies by all applicants who wish to postpone their course – please see the History Faculty MPhil Funding guides for more details.
7. You should note that applicants for Gates funding should view the Gates Scholarship website <http://www.gates.scholarships.cam.ac.uk/> immediately upon reading this notice to assure themselves of the closing dates for these scholarships.

PLEASE ALSO NOTE: 15 October 2009 is the deadline for return of the Faculty's Funding Advance Notification Forms for ALL POTENTIAL APPLICANTS FOR ORS AND GATES FUNDING SCHEMES WHO WISH TO DEFER ADMISSION TO OCTOBER 2010. The Faculty's Funding Advance Notification Form can be located at the back of the Faculty's MPhil Funding Guide booklet – this can be located on the Faculty's website.

The MPhil Sub-Committee would be most obliged if **those students who have been offered a place but are definitely not able to take up that place and do not wish to defer admission**, would notify the MPhil Office immediately.

16. Contact Details

Any **specific questions concerning this course** should be addressed in the first instance to:

The Administrator of the MPhil in African Studies
University of Cambridge
Centre of African Studies
The Mond Building
Free School Lane
Cambridge CB2 3RF
UK

Telephone: +44 (0)1223 334 396 Fax: +44 (0)1223 769 329
Email: afrenq@hermes.cam.ac.uk
Web page: <http://www.african.cam.ac.uk>

Application forms and general information about graduate study at the University of Cambridge are available from:

The Secretary of the Board of Graduate Studies
University of Cambridge
PO Box 338
Cambridge CB2 1YP
UK

Telephone: +44 (0)1223 760 606 Fax: +44 (0)1223 335 723
Email: admissions@gradstudies.cam.ac.uk
Web page: <http://www.admin.ac.uk/offices/gradstud/>

Checklist for Preparing Applications

Applicants for admission MUST submit:

- THREE PAPER COPIES of the Graduate Application Form (GRADSAF) and THREE copies of the supporting documentation listed below** to be sent directly to the Centre of African Studies, Mond Building, Free School Lane, Cambridge CB2 3RF.
- TWO COPIES of the completed GRADSAF (three, if from outside the UK) and two/three copies of all supporting documentation** to be sent to the Board of Graduate Studies, PO Box 338, Cambridge, CB2 1YP (tel. 01223-760606). You can use the Board of Graduate Studies' online application facility or download the application from the website and submit a paper application:
<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/gsprospectus/applying/howtoapply.html>

The following documents must accompany the copy of your application which you send to the Centre of African Studies (3 of each document is required. It would be extremely helpful if you could separate these into 3 sets, as far as possible):

- Copy of degree certificate and detailed transcript** of grades together with an official explanation of the Marking Scheme used
- Two confidential academic references. For those applicants whose native language is NOT English, applicants are required to request their referees to comment on their command of English**
- Statement of Research.** Please note that the Centre of African Studies insist that all applicants must provide a longer and more carefully argued statement of research intent on a separate page. The statement of planned research should provide an indication of chronological period and intended area of research within the scope of the MPhil and not more than 1,000 words (2-5 pages) in length. **In addition, all applicants must submit a clear short title for the proposed research topic.**
- Writing Sample:** In order to help the Centre judge the ability of applicants, a sample of *written work* **must** be included with all applications. All work must be submitted *in English*. Candidates **must** declare that the sample piece submitted with their application is substantially their own work. Writing samples should be no more than 8,00 words in length.
- Personal Development questionnaire** (to be completed and detached from the back of this prospectus)
- English language competence test results (if applicable)
- Plans for PhD study (if applicable) or plans for further career
- DO NOT FORGET TO COMPLETE, IF APPLICABLE:**
ADVANCE NOTIFICATION FORM – see MPhil Funding Guide

All overseas applicants should be sure to send their applications for admission to the Board of Graduate Studies as early as possible, to allow for any delays in the postal system. Applications arriving later than the deadline will not be considered.

Personal Development Questionnaire

-----PLEASE DETACH-----	<p>ALL APPLICANTS: Please complete, detach, copy and enclose this Personal Development Questionnaire with all copies of your application for admission</p> <p>The Centre of African Studies, particularly its supervisors, are very interested to know what skills and experience you have gained already and what are likely to be your future training requirements.</p> <p>Disclaimer: The Centre cannot guarantee to be able to meet all your future training requirements, if you are accepted for admission.</p>
	<p>Personal Development Questionnaire Please continue on a separate sheet where necessary</p>
	<p>YOUR NAME: (First Name) (Last Name) ADDRESS:</p>
	<p>Previous study – what general skills (eg IT, communication, research, etc) have you acquired so far? Please specify skills (eg Access), how you obtained them (eg attendance at a course) and how you have used them (eg created database of 16th century village inhabitants)</p>
	<p>Previous study – what subject-specific skills have you acquired so far? Please specify skills, how you obtained them and how you have used them</p>

-----PLEASE DETACH-----	Your proposed course at Cambridge - what general skills do you believe you will need to acquire whilst at Cambridge in order to complete the proposed course you are applying for?
	Your proposed course at Cambridge - what subject-specific skills do you believe you will need to acquire whilst at Cambridge in order to complete the proposed course you are applying for?

Application Deadlines

Applicants must be aware that there are different deadlines for the receipt of their application for admission because of the different funding bodies to which applicants are applying for financial support and the need for the Faculty to be able to complete the admissions process well ahead of the funding process.

You must **IGNORE the 15 December admission deadline** on the Board of Graduate Studies website. **IT IS ESSENTIAL** that your application arrives **BY THE DEADLINES GIVEN BELOW**, so that the Centre of African Studies will have enough time to process your application.

You MUST APPLY for admission by:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 15 OCTOBER 2009 | if you are an overseas applicant for admission (all non-British nationality applicants) and are applying for Research Council, equivalent, and other Cambridge funding (see MPhil/PhD Funding Guide). |
| 15 DECEMBER 2009 | if you are a home applicant for admission (all British nationality applicants) and are applying for Research Council, equivalent, and other Cambridge funding (see MPhil/PhD Funding Guide). |
| 30 JUNE 2010 | if you intend to secure funding from any other source eg. private and/or sponsored funding. |