



College Lectureship in English (650 to 1550) (part-time)

Further Particulars

St. Peter's College invites applications for a two-year part-time College Lectureship in English (650 to 1550) for a period of two years (1 October 2026 to 30 September 2027).

Applicants should have completed, or have made substantial progress towards, a doctoral dissertation in this subject. The position will be particularly suitable for an early career scholar seeking experience in college teaching and administration.

The College currently admits *circa* eight undergraduate students a year to read English or Joint Schools with English. The appointee will work alongside Professor Marina MacKay, Professor Henry Power and other College Lecturers.

Full information about the College is available on the College website www.spc.ox.ac.uk.

1. General

The person appointed to the post will be expected to teach the equivalent of five hours of tutorials or classes for the College each week. They will teach papers in Old English and Middle English Language and Literature (further details below) and provide undergraduate dissertation supervision and oversight of students in Course II where appropriate. The appointee may also be required to teach some Visiting Students. In addition, they will be expected where possible to take a full role in undergraduate admissions in week 9 of Michaelmas term.

2. Duties

The main responsibilities of the Lecturer will be as follows:

1. To plan and provide tutorial and class teaching for up to an average of five weighted hours¹ in each week of full term (eight weeks each) through doing the following:
 - Teaching tutorials and classes for Section A ('Approaches to Language') of Prelims Paper 1 (Introduction to English Language and Literature) in Hilary term. Further information about the content of the paper can be found in Appendix A.
 - Teaching tutorials and classes for Prelims Paper 2 (Literature in English 650-1350) in Michaelmas and Hilary terms (with revision sessions in Trinity term). Further information about the content of the paper can be found in Appendix A.

¹ Under the College's weighting system for Stipendiary Lecturers, teaching hours are worked out on the basis of teaching students in pairs. Any hours spent teaching larger groups are counted as 1.2 hours, while any hours spent with individual students count as 0.8 hours.)

- Teaching tutorials and classes for FHS Paper 2 (Literature in English 1350-1550) in Michaelmas and Hilary terms (with revision sessions in Trinity term). Further information about the content of the paper in Appendix A.
 - The appointee may also be expected to offer teaching to Visiting Students in areas of English Language and Literature 650-1550 and to assist in the teaching of any students taking Course II (the medieval-focused strand of the Final Honours School).
 - The appointee may also be expected to provide dissertation supervision to St Peter's finalists where appropriate.
2. To ensure that students receive timely feedback on their work during term, both week by week and in termly reports, and to set and mark internal examinations ('Collections').
 3. To participate where possible in College admissions procedures, including reading UCAS forms, written work and interviewing (during December each year).
 4. To undertake day-to-day academic administration to support and enhance undergraduate education (e.g. the writing of references for students; the selection of books for the College Library, etc.).
 5. To undertake pastoral responsibilities for students studying English in consultation with other English tutors at St Peter's and in liaison with the College Welfare Team.

A more detailed guide to tutorial responsibilities and other information will be communicated to the successful candidate by the Senior Tutor following appointment.

3. Selection Criteria

To be successful, candidates will need to show that they meet the following selection criteria:

- (i) have completed or be about to complete a doctorate in English Literature in a topic relevant to the teaching range required;
- (ii) have experience in teaching English Literature and Language from 650-1550;
- (iii) demonstrate the ability to be an effective and inspiring teacher of English Literature and Language, particularly to undergraduates of high ability in a tutorial system;
- (iv) have the potential to discharge willingly and competently the full range of academic administrative duties, besides teaching, upon which the effective operation of English as a subject within the College depends;
- (v) have good communication and interpersonal skills; and
- (vi) be prepared to undertake admissions and other training if necessary.

4. Remuneration and conditions

Term of appointment

The appointment will be for a fixed term of two years starting on 1 October 2026.

Remuneration and other conditions

Remuneration will be *pro rata* on the Senior Tutors Committee scale for Stipendiary Lecturers. The current (2025-26) rate for a 5-hour post is £14,088 to £15,558 pa (£1,174 to £1,296 per month). The appointee will have access to an entertainment allowance of £149 per annum.

Pension scheme

The Lecturer will be automatically enrolled in the Universities Superannuation Scheme with effect from the start date of their employment; it is possible subsequently to opt out.

Senior Common Room

The successful candidate will be an associate member of the Senior Common Room and will be entitled to five free lunches or dinners per week during termtime and two lunches per week during the vacation, provided that the kitchens are open (they are occasionally closed for short periods, normally during the vacation). They will not be a member of the College's Governing Body.

5. Application procedure

Candidates should send a letter of application, a CV and the names and contact details of two referees electronically to the Fellows' Secretary (academic.appointments@spc.ox.ac.uk), St Peter's College by **12 noon on Thursday 6 August 2026**. (There is no application form.)

Please include the words 'English Lectureship' in the subject line of all email correspondence.

We will ask for references for shortlisted candidates once the shortlisting is complete.

It is expected that interviews will take place on **Thursday 20 August 2026**, with invitations to interview being issued the previous week. General queries about the post can be sent to Prof Marina MacKay (marina.mackay@spc.ox.ac.uk).

St Peter's is an equal opportunities employer.

The appointment will be subject to the provision of proof of the right to work in the UK.

July 2026

APPENDIX A

Prelims Paper 1: Introduction to English Language and Literature

[N.B. This paper is in two sections: 'Approaches to Language' and 'Approaches to Literature'; the appointee is responsible only for delivery of the former.]

This paper is intended to introduce you to English language and literature as a discipline, and to a variety of approaches to reading texts. It will introduce you to formal study of the English language, with particular reference to its historical development, its use as a literary medium, and the role of cultural and social factors on its development and use. The paper will also acquaint you with a wide range of theoretical issues and reading skills, but in doing so seeks to encourage you to think for yourself and to exercise critical scrutiny.

The English Faculty Library's Guide to Prelims 1: <http://ox.libguides.com/english-prelims-paper-1> contains direct links to an invaluable range of online and bibliographic resources. Many of these are essential for work on the language section of the paper.

There is a course of 16 core lectures which run weekly through Michaelmas and Hilary terms. The lectures in Michaelmas Term will cover topics relating to literature, and those in Hilary Term will cover language.

Colleges will normally supplement these by eight college classes spread over those two terms, and by four tutorials. This college teaching will give you the opportunity to practise written work for your portfolio examination.

NOTE: College tutors will not necessarily base classes and tutorials on the weekly lecture topics and the further reading that accompanies them. The lectures are designed to introduce topics and to suggest approaches to them. Your college work will supplement and challenge what you have learnt in lectures. You will be expected to make connections between and around the lecture topics, and you will want to think about how studying for this paper informs and enriches your first year work as a whole.

Assessment for this paper will be by portfolio. The examination paper, consisting of a section on language and a section on literature, will be released by the Faculty on Monday of week 4 of Trinity Term. Your portfolio will consist of two pieces of written work of between 1,500 and 2,000 words each (including footnotes but excluding bibliography). The portfolio must be submitted online on Thursday of week 5, Trinity Term.

Questions in the language section require an answer in the form of a commentary.

This commentary is based on texts or extracts of texts that you choose for yourself. A passage or extract of text is defined as a single continuous extract; brief ellipses in an otherwise continuous text may be acceptable, but it is not acceptable to take several separate extracts from the same work (e.g. the opening of a novel plus part of chapter 3).

You should be careful to select textual material that meets the precise terms of the question you have chosen to answer. Unless the question specifies otherwise, the texts you choose may be either literary or non-literary, and produced in any historical period (**NB**. If you are using a modern edition of a text written in an earlier period, e.g. a novel by Charles Dickens, you should also cite the original date of publication of the novel as well as the date of the modern edition). You may select texts that include visual images or graphics if you judge that to be appropriate in relation to a particular question, but language is expected to be the primary focus. You should not choose texts that contain no verbal material at all. Likewise,

candidates should not attempt to make their own texts by e.g. transcribing oral material. The texts chosen for commentary must not be produced by the candidate.

Copies of your chosen extracts (either screenshots or photocopies) must be included as an appendix to the portfolio, with bibliographical details as appropriate. The combined length of the material you have used must not exceed 70 lines in total. You should indicate the total line length for the material you have used at the top of the first page of your answer. Texts should be clearly annotated with line numbers e.g. every five lines (it is fine to do this by hand). No other annotations should be made on the submitted extracts. Should retyping of your originals be judged necessary (e.g. because it is impossible to make a readable photocopy of your chosen text), it must follow the format of the source exactly (the source text should also be supplied). Photocopied or scanned material must be easily readable—candidates should not submit copies that have been misaligned so that parts of the original are missing, or copies which are too small, too light or too dark to be deciphered.

Bibliographies should appear at the end of the answer to which they pertain rather than as a separate document.

In rare instances, a student may wish to discuss a text containing distressing or offensive language, but not to reproduce in full the words concerned (whether within their commentary, or in retyping an original text in the instances identified above, i.e. where that is judged necessary). If you want to do this, you may use a form of ellipsis mark and provide a note clarifying that this is what you are doing.

Questions in the literature section require an answer in the form of an essay.

You must avoid duplicating material used in this paper when answering other papers, i.e. if writing on a text or extract from a text under this paper, you may not write on the same text under any other Prelims paper. In addition, you are not permitted to duplicate material between the two sections of the portfolio. For the literature section, note that the general rule prohibiting you from writing more than one third of your essay about texts not originally written in English is suspended. Here you may write on non-English primary and secondary texts. However, if you are discussing texts not originally in English, please provide a translation, which will not count towards the word count.

Prelims Paper 2: Early Medieval Literature, c. 650 - 1350

This paper introduces literatures characterized by astonishing invention and innovation. In 650 Britain and Ireland comprised numerous competing kingdoms. Christianity, introduced to England in the late sixth century by missionaries from the Roman and Celtic Churches, was assuming a dominant religious and cultural influence. Languages and cultures mingled and clashed, including early English dialects, Irish, Welsh, Pictish, Old Norse, Byzantine, and varieties of Latin. This is the time of the earliest extant English poem ascribed to a named author, Cædmon, yet the seventh century also produced, in Bede, the finest scholar in Europe at the time; in Aldhelm one of the most talented of poets (he wrote in Latin); and at Canterbury the best school in northern Europe, run by an abbot born in North Africa and an archbishop from Tarsus (in what is now south-east Turkey).

By 1350 England was a powerful nation with imperial ambitions, embroiled in wars with Scotland and France, but also ravaged by the Black Death of 1348. King Edward III and his court chroniclers and poets drew upon an extensive cultural and literary heritage, in which history and fiction blended, consciously emulating the legendary King Arthur, holding tournaments and festivals in celebration of court, knighthood and chivalry. And around the

middle of the whole period comes the Norman Conquest of 1066 and the subsequent colonization of England and, in time, Wales and parts of Ireland. The Norman castles and cathedrals still prominent in many towns are only one kind of material legacy from 650–1350, in which the development of literacy, manuscript production, the legal system, schools and universities including Oxford gave huge scope for artistic and literary creativity.

The Norman Conquest changed English language and literature profoundly, and helps mark a shift between what we call Old English (to c.1100) and Early Middle English (c.1100 to c.1300 or so). However, it was one of numerous moments of political and demographic change, starting with Germanic migration before this period begins, and including Viking and Danish raiders, settlers and rulers, religious and mercantile travellers, and a significant community of Jews, who became subject to persecution and were eventually expelled in the late thirteenth century. At the same time, successive attempts to capture and control contested holy sites such as Jerusalem fed the development of religious and racial, including racist, ideologies. Throughout this period, questions of identity and belonging are probed across a vast range of literary forms: lyric and epic; debate and dialogue; riddles; secular and saintly biographies; fable and vision; sermons and sagas; history and romance.

In the 3-hour examination you will write two essays, and will be able to choose between writing a critical commentary on a passage of either Old or Early Middle English. The passages set will be taken from the following recommended texts.

i. Old English (All in Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson, *A Guide to Old English* (Oxford, 2012), 8th edition.)

- The Dream of the Rood
- The Battle of Maldon
- The Wanderer
- an extract from Beowulf ('Beowulf's fight with Grendel', lines 702–897)

ii. Early Middle English

- The Owl and the Nightingale, an extract (in John Burrow and Thorlac Turville-Petre, *A Book of Middle English*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 2005), lines 1–390)
- Layamon's Brut, an extract (in W.R.J. Barron and S.C. Weinberg, *Layamon's Arthur* (Exeter, 2001), lines 13971–14297)
- Havelok, an extract (in Ronald B. Herzman, Graham Drake, and Eve Salisbury, *Four Romances of England* (Kalamazoo, 1999), lines 2512–2855)
- Ancrene Wisse, an extract (in Robert Hasenfratz, *Ancrene Wisse* (Kalamazoo, 2000) Part 7, lines 1–194).

(Annotated editions of all these texts and extracts are available on Canvas)

On the examination paper candidates will be able to choose from a total of four commentary passages each year (two Old English and two Early Middle English). You will be expected to comment on aspects of content and style and to show that you have a good understanding of either Old or Early Middle English as a literary language.

The essay questions will tend to be based on topics rather than individual authors. You can answer them with reference to either Old or Early Middle English literature, or by comparative consideration of the two. You are expected to focus closely on the recommended texts (Old and/or Early Middle English) in your work for this paper as a whole, but there is also scope to read beyond the recommended texts and to work more broadly on some of the major preoccupations of the literature of the period c. 650–1350. You may write an essay on the text on which you also write a commentary, but if you do so you must not repeat material. You must show substantial knowledge of at least THREE texts across the two essays. You may write on texts in languages other than English (e.g. Latin, Anglo-Norman, Old Norse) for up to one third of this paper (e.g. all of one essay, or a portion of both essays). However, you are required to show substantial knowledge of Old English and/or Early Middle English language in BOTH Section A and Section B of the paper.

FHS Paper 2: Literature in English 1350–1550

At the beginning of this period, Europe was entering into a period of social change in the wake of the pandemic known as the Black Death. People in Britain and Ireland spoke and wrote in several languages (including dialects of English and Scots; Welsh; Cornish; Irish; French; Latin), and cultural exchange was facilitated by extensive global trade networks stretching well beyond the Mediterranean. In the fifteenth century, the advent of printing, and European encounters with the so-called New World of the Americas are powerful historical markers of change, along with repeated bloody conflict including the Wars of the Roses, and the ongoing Hundred Years' War. By 1550, religious reform, Tudor court politics and humanist scholarship helped change both literary forms and their engagement with larger literate audiences. The literature produced across these two hundred years can be profoundly European, often rooted in classical, Italian and French sources, existing in multilingual manuscripts, and explicitly engaging with international political, religious, and cultural concerns. Much of it also engages colonial and postcolonial concerns in its entanglement with the Crusades and their imaginative aftermath (particularly in romance), with European expansionism and encounters with different cultures (for instance in More's *Utopia*), and in its fantasies of travel (for instance Mandeville's *Travels*). Equally, much of it serves local and personal interests and was circulated amongst small groups of listeners and readers. As you study this paper, you will be encouraged to think about how literature in different varieties of English is embedded within other literatures, and to interrogate the periodization of 'late medieval' and 'renaissance' or early modern'.

This paper covers the work of Chaucer and other major fourteenth-century writers (such as Langland, the Gawain-poet and Gower), as well as that of less widely known names, and many anonymous texts. Women such as Margery Kempe, who travelled to Jerusalem and Rome and wrote an early 'autobiography,' and Julian of Norwich, an important mystic and theologian, are key literary figures in this period. The paper also covers fifteenth-century writers (such as Hoccleve, Malory and the Older Scots poets), and writers of the early Tudor period (such as Skelton, Wyatt, Surrey and More). Much of the time you might group your reading not by author, but by genre or manuscript collection. One of the most important genres across the period is drama: from the religious cycle plays, performed in the streets of cities, to morality plays acted in the round, to household drama (such as Medwall's plays) acted in great halls. However, the paper includes a great variety of written forms, from love lyrics to chronicles, dream visions to advice books, and from animal fables to Arthurian romances.

Areas for investigation include: authorship and authority; translation; vernacularity; manuscript culture; early print culture; medieval literary theory; the performance of gender; travel writing; autobiography; heresy and orthodoxy; chivalry; race and ethnicity; subjectivity; genre theory; literature and kingship; literature and the marketplace. As much recent

scholarship has demonstrated, a wide range of theoretical and formalist approaches can be taken to the literature of this period. Most colleges teach this paper in the first two terms of your second year and regular lectures covering the literature of the period also take place during these two terms.

The paper will contain a compulsory commentary element designed to ensure that your study of Middle English literature is accompanied by a good acquaintance with its language and registers. The set text for this part of the paper is Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* (Riverside edition). You may also write on Chaucer in the essay section of the exam, but discussion of his works may take up no more than one essay (or equivalent, spread across both essays). It is not advisable to write substantially on *Troilus and Criseyde* in the essay section of the paper. Note that the Auchinleck manuscript, though produced probably in the 1330s, may be studied within this paper. You can also work on later responses to medieval texts, from early modern ballads, through Pre-Raphaelite medievalism, to Zadie Smith's Chaucerian play, but you must show substantial knowledge of texts from 1350-1550 in both essays.

This paper is examined by a three-hour timed exam. Students will be expected to answer two essay questions, and one commentary question.