

## ASSESSMENT AND TUITION

### How to study AA100: the role of assessment

Doing the written assignments and getting feedback on them is a core part of your learning which requires practice and patience. The module incorporates an element of reflective learning to enable you to learn from tutor feedback and to revise your work in the light of that feedback. Written assignments are at the heart of your study because they test your knowledge and understanding of what you've been taught while also helping you to practise crucial study skills.

As you will rapidly see, *The Arts Past and Present* covers a vast range of people and periods. In the first book alone, we move from the Ancient Egypt of Cleopatra through to the contemporary world in the guise of the fourteenth Dalai Lama. You will be encountering new information and perspectives on almost every page. This raises what might feel like worrying questions: Do I have to remember everything I learn on the module? Will I be penalised if I can't hold all of it in my head at once?

The short answer is no. As you will see from the Assignment Booklet, not every chapter is tested by a submitted assignment. Because there is no exam, there is no need to revise the module as a whole, or to retain the wide amount of detail which the module covers in your mind en bloc.

This means that in studying the module, you have a considerable amount of leeway about how you choose to focus your energies. We suggest that you try to give each chapter equal attention, though we recognise that this may not always be possible. It would not be a good idea simply to focus on those chapters which have submitted assignments. While this might give you the impression of rationalising your overall workload, in reality this would be a false economy. Since the module has been designed as a totality, you need to be aware that different chapters over different books are interdependent. For example, the chapter on Ireland in Book 2 and the two chapters on Benin (Book 3) start from the assumption that you have already studied the chapters on Stalin and Cleopatra in Book 1 because of their shared concern with how historians approach and interpret the evidence of the past. There are similar examples with other subject areas, and there are several cases where chapters are interdependent across subjects: for example, the chapter on *The Burial at Thebes* in Book 3 picks up on the discussion of tragedy as a dramatic form from the chapter on *Doctor Faustus* in Book 1. You'll start to notice and benefit from these cross-connections as you study; they should enhance your enjoyment of the module and aid your confidence in the Arts and Humanities. This advice links with the earlier point made about the value of in-text and DVD ROM exercises: by using these prompts, you will be increasing your analytical and evaluative skills which will in turn improve your written assignments.

The module also includes a number of online quizzes and interactive exercises which are signalled by the study planner. These are intended to help you try out new skills and to test your knowledge of the study materials in an enjoyable way.

In sum, *The Arts Past and Present* has been designed so that you can have an interest in every chapter. We don't expect you to do a degree in each of the seven main subject areas, but we hope that in beginning your degree with a broad-based module you will come away from it with a vital sense of the connections between different areas of knowledge. Intellectual

curiosity isn't a formal learning outcome, or something which we can assess with an essay question, but it is something which the module has been designed to reward and foster.

## **AA100 assignments**

Your work on *The Arts Past and Present* will be assessed through seven assignments which will be marked by your tutor, and a final written assignment which will be marked by a different tutor. The assignments range in their type and function: five are formal pieces of written work which will test your understanding of key concepts; two are reflective assignments, which are designed to help you with the presentation of your work and in learning from your tutor's feedback. The final assignment, which focuses on Book 4, is an end-of-module assessment (EMA), which will help to determine your final result for the module as a whole in conjunction with the other assignments.

For full details on issues such as deadlines, how to submit your assignments and the marking criteria your tutor will use, see the Assessment resources section of the module website.

## **Tuition arrangements**

*The Arts Past and Present* is taught through a range of media, including correspondence tuition, and face-to-face, telephone and online tutorials. You'll be taught by a tutor who will contact you as close as possible to the start of the module. Your tutor will be responsible for marking your main assignments. He or she will also organise face-to-face tutorials for your main tutor group of about fifteen other students. These sessions are not compulsory, but you are strongly encouraged to attend them: they will enable you to meet your tutor and fellow students in a relaxed environment and to share your experiences of the module. Your tutor will use these tutorials to reinforce key teaching points, and to help you prepare for written assignments. Your tutor may also organise telephone and/or synchronous electronic tutorials at important moments during the module. Your region may offer day schools, where you'll have the opportunity to participate in sessions led by other tutors.

Your main tutor group and tutor will also be a part of a larger online group or forum, in which you'll work alongside students from other groups and their tutors. These larger groups are designed to foster broad-based debate about module content and to reinforce key concepts and skills. You'll be able to exchange perspectives with a wider range of students in this medium. The forums will also enable you to interact with different tutors, who may have different academic expertise from your home tutor. They will all be keen to facilitate your learning in this medium. You'll need to remember that your home tutor is your central point of contact, and for all issues relating to assignments and your academic progress you'll need to contact this person first. There will also be from time to time a national forum in which members of the module team will participate to answer questions about their chapters.

Different forms of tuition have different pros and cons which you'll rapidly become aware of as you participate in them. The module team believes that the way you study this module should mirror the way in which it has been devised and written. We've worked in several overlapping teams using a wide variety of media; in a similar spirit, the tuition has been designed to give you exposure to a range of activities and conversations. We hope you enjoy the process of learning as much as we've enjoyed the process of creation.