



ANGLO-SAXON, NORSE, AND CELTIC
ADMISSIONS ASSESSMENT

CONTENT SPECIFICATION

2017

Overview

The purpose of the Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic Admissions Assessment is to determine a candidate's potential to achieve in an academically demanding undergraduate degree course. The assessment is designed to be challenging, in order to differentiate effectively between able applicants, including those who may have achieved the highest possible grades in school examinations.

The assessment will take two hours and consists of two sections:

Section 1

Section 1 is an assessment of candidates' reading skills, including their ability to read critically, understand main ideas in texts, analyse detail and grasp implicit meaning.

Section 1 is in multiple-choice format. 1 hour is allowed for this section of the assessment.

Section 2

Section 2 requires candidates to answer one of two questions, producing a written response to a text extract. This section is designed to assess candidates' ability to read closely, analyse texts, and show a broader awareness of the context and features of texts. No prior knowledge will be assumed.

1 hour is allowed for this section of the assessment.

Dictionaries may **not** be used in any part of this assessment.

Section 1

Section 1 of the Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic Admissions Assessment assesses the ability to understand and draw meaning from texts in a multiple-choice format. This section of the assessment is not subject-specific, and texts included will be on a variety of topics and may be drawn from a range of sources.

All academic subjects require the ability to critically read a variety of sometimes challenging texts for meaning. Specifically, the tasks in Section 1 focus on identifying the way in which the texts are structured, the main ideas being presented, and the way in which these are supported and developed.

Section 1 consists of four tasks, based around text excerpts. Each task will have a set of multiple-choice questions with four options. Questions will not require specialist knowledge or any information beyond what is contained within the texts.

There is a specimen question for Section 1 in the Appendix of this document.

Content

Each task will use recently written texts, from authentic sources, in English. Sources may include works of non-fiction (at a relatively high level conceptually and linguistically but which do not assume specialist subject knowledge), newspapers, general interest magazines, book reviews, abstracts written for research papers or journal articles, and professional websites. Texts will not depend on the understanding of specific aspects of British culture.

Questions will require candidates to:

- look at the main ideas and focus of a text;
- analyse the detail, and distinguish opinions and attitudes presented in the text;
- determine the writer's purpose in writing the text, including consideration of intended audience;
- extract implications and implicitly stated elements of the text;
- draw comparisons and contrasts within a text or between different texts.

For all tasks, the emphasis is on identification of opinion, attitude, purpose and inferred meaning rather than the retrieval of directly stated factual details. Questions may also focus on elements of text organisation which support meaning, such as the use of exemplification and comparison.

Format

Section 1 consists of four tasks. **Candidates will be required to answer all questions in all of the tasks.** Each task will consist of one or more text excerpts and a set of four-option multiple-choice questions. There will be no overlap between tasks. Answers to questions will not depend on other questions.

Task 1: Understanding Short Texts

Questions in this task are on two short abstracts or reviews on a common topic. Texts will be no more than 200 words each. The task assesses a candidate's ability to identify, compare and contrast features of two different texts. The candidate's understanding of the two texts is tested through discrete questions aiming to cover a wide range of focuses with the emphasis on identification of opinion, attitude, purpose and inferred meaning rather than the retrieval of directly stated factual details. Questions may also focus on elements of text organisation which support meaning, such as the use of exemplification, comparison and reference.

Task 2: Multiple-Matching

Questions in this task are on four short extracts, either from four different writers on the same theme or four extracts from the same source. Extracts will be no more than 200 words each. This task requires candidates to locate a text where a particular idea is expressed, discounting ideas in other texts which may appear similar but do not reflect the whole of the question accurately. Each question requires the candidate to scan the four texts to locate the area of text which appears to contain the answer, and then to read this carefully to check that it is the correct answer.

Task 3: Understanding Extended Text

Questions in this task are on one extended text (of no more than 1000 words). The task assesses the understanding of a longer stretch of academic text which may include argument, supported claims, and reference to previous work and ideas in a particular field.

Task 4: Understanding Extended Text

Like Task 3, Task 4 tests the understanding of a longer stretch of academic text (in this case, of up to 1200 words) which may include argument, supported claims, and reference to previous work and ideas in a particular field.

Scoring

All questions are worth 1 mark. Marks are not deducted for incorrect answers, so candidates are advised to answer all questions.

Section 2

Section 2 requires candidates to answer one of two questions to produce a written response to a text extract. This section is designed to assess a candidate's ability to read closely, analyse texts, and show a broader awareness of the context and features of texts. No prior knowledge will be assumed. 1 hour is allowed for this section of the test.

There is a specimen question for Section 2 in the Appendix of this document.

For Question 1 ('How could an historian approach this poem as a source for the history of Anglo-Saxon England?') a good answer would include: consideration of the author's perspective, and how that may have affected his presentation of events; consideration of the possibility that other sources exist for the battle; an attempt to gain an understanding of the political context based on the information provided in the poem and the footnotes; and an awareness that the poem may differ in style and structure from the rest of the prose chronicle.

For Question 2 ('With reference to this poem, discuss the uses that a literary scholar could make of a poem on a historical topic.') a good answer would include: discussion of the structure of the poem; discussion of themes (including themes found in literature of many periods, e.g. heroism, but also themes specific to this poem); discussion of the characters; consideration of why verse has been chosen as the medium for this subject; and consideration of linguistic features such as repetition (although linguistic analysis is difficult given that the poem is presented in translation).

APPENDIX: SPECIMEN QUESTIONS

Section 1

Task 1

Read the two abstracts below, which give summaries of two academic articles relating to cities and urban development. For questions 1 – 6, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the texts.

ABSTRACT ONE

Retrofitting cities: Local governance in Sydney, Australia

Robyn Dowling, Pauline McGuirk, Harriet Bulkeley

Transforming cities to a lower carbon future is a key challenge of contemporary urban governance. Retrofitting the city – or modifying existing urban infrastructures, buildings and daily life to suit different energy sources and expectations of energy consumption – is essential to this transformation. In urban studies, little focus has been applied to the shape and character of urban governance frameworks and mechanisms required to successfully retrofit cities. In this paper we address this **lacuna** by exploring the **logics, practices and dynamics** of retrofitting governance in the Australian city. Using a **governmentality** perspective, the paper identifies the involvements of different scales of government in retrofitting policies and mechanisms and connections between them. Based on our survey of carbon reduction initiatives involving government, business and community actors across Australia's cities, we outline the types of retrofitting solutions being proposed and enacted. Focussing on initiatives from Sydney, Australia's largest city, the paper documents four key techniques through which retrofitting is being governed – self-governing, **holistic**, facilitative and educative. The findings indicate that governance gaps remain in attending to the daily life of technologies and the **materiality** of daily life.

ABSTRACT TWO

Critical research on eco-cities? A walk through the Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco-City, China

Federico Caprotti

This article uses the narrative tool of a walk through Tianjin Eco-City, China, as an entry point in raising and discussing key questions in contemporary eco-city research. Eco-city projects are becoming increasingly prevalent in policy and political-economic discourses in a variety of locations as new urban spaces where blueprints for low carbon economies can be trialled. In light of this, the article highlights the necessity of, firstly, considering scale when analyzing eco-city 'futures'. Secondly, the article argues for the need to interrogate eco-cities' definitions, as well as their evaluation, performance and monitoring frameworks, as this will aid in critical analyses of the marketing and presentation of actually built eco-city projects. Thirdly, the question of **internal social resilience** needs to be assessed: this is of crucial importance in light of the **exclusive, gated nature** of several flagship eco-city **projects under construction** at present. Lastly, the article argues that research on eco-city projects needs to consider not only high-tech, **new urban environments**, but also the low-paid workers who form what the article calls the **'new urban poor'**, forming large, often transient populations on the edges of flagship 'sustainable' urban projects worldwide.

- 1 According to Abstract One, what is the main aim of the article on retrofitting cities?
- A to defend the idea of retrofitting
 - B to point out weaknesses in retrofitting technology
 - C to describe the technology required for retrofitting
 - D to look at methods of achieving retrofitting
- 2 Which word from Abstract One describes the theoretical framework used by the writers in their analysis of retrofitting in Sydney?
- A 'lacuna'
 - B 'governmentality'
 - C 'holistic'
 - D 'materiality'
- 3 In Abstract One, the writers claim that one feature of their research is that
- A they have engaged with an area representing a weakness in the field.
 - B they have proposed a way of integrating key techniques.
 - C they have identified potentially divisive underlying attitudes.
 - D they have employed a controversial methodology.
- 4 In Abstract Two, the writer says that eco-city projects are important because
- A they show that low carbon economies are sustainable.
 - B they provide an opportunity for testing economic models.
 - C they offer new opportunities for disadvantaged groups.
 - D they encourage political involvement in environmental issues.

- 5 In Abstract Two, 'exclusive, gated nature' contrasts with
- A 'internal social resilience'.
 - B 'new urban environments'.
 - C 'new urban poor'.
 - D 'projects under construction'.
- 6 Which abstract refers to the physical experience of a particular city being used as a stylistic device?
- A neither abstract
 - B both abstracts
 - C Abstract One only
 - D Abstract Two only

Key

1 D 2 B 3 A 4 B 5 C 6 D

Section 2

The poem below has been translated from Old English. It comes from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, a year-by-year account that is generally in prose. There is no expectation that you will have seen the poem before, or that you will know about its context.

Read the poem and write an essay on the separate answer sheet in response to **one** of the following:

1. **How could an historian approach this poem as a source for the history of Anglo-Saxon England?**
2. **With reference to this poem, discuss the uses that a literary scholar could make of a poem on a historical topic.**

Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, A.D. 937

This was the year when Athelstan,¹ king
 Of Wessex,² prince among earls and patron
 Of heroes, and his noble brother, Edmund,³
 Hacked a lifelong glory from a battle
 Near Brunanburh.⁴ They shattered the phalanx 5
 Their swords splintered the linden shields,
 And the sons of Edward followed their father,⁵
 Proved the blood they had tested in battle
 Before, defending their land and their homes
 Against every invader. The enemy ran, 10
 All the Scots and the shipborne Vikings,
 Ran or drowned in blood, dropped
 To a landlocked fate as the glorious sun
 Went gliding over the earth like a candle
 In God's broad palm, blowing sublimely 15
 Across the sky and dipping calmly
 To darkness and night. The dead lay piled
 Where the spears had left them, Vikings and Scots,
 Tired, now, of the struggle, and wanting
 Only to rest. All the battle 20
 Became the Wessex cavalry endlessly
 Hunting a broken enemy, their honed
 And sparkling blades striking home
 In fugitives' backs. No Mercian⁶ refused
 To aim his sword at any man 25
 Who'd shared a sail with Anlaf,⁷ shipped
 Himself across a stormy sea
 To a bloody port. Five young princes
 Pitched their beds on the battleground

¹ King Athelstan ruled from 924 until his death in 939.

² Wessex was an Anglo-Saxon kingdom in the south of England. Its capital was Winchester (Hampshire).

³ Athelstan's half-brother, Edmund, became king in 939 and ruled until his death in 946.

⁴ The location has not been conclusively identified. One popular suggestion is Bromborough on the Wirral peninsula (Merseyside).

⁵ King Edward the Elder ruled from 899 until his death in 924.

⁶ Mercia was an Anglo-Saxon kingdom in the English Midlands. By this time it was under the control of the Wessex kings.

⁷ *Anlaf* is a rendering of the name *Óláfr*. Óláfr Guðrøðsson was a king of Scandinavian origin. He ruled Dublin (934–41) and York (939–41).

And would never awake, and seven of Anlaf's 30
 Earls, and a host of invaders, Viking
 And Scottish. Anlaf himself fought
 His way to the prow of a ship, he
 And a tiny band, forced to flee;
 They pressed to sea on a dull brown tide 35
 That floated the king to safety. Nor
 Did the old one, Constantine,⁸ trailing
 Defeat behind him all the way North,
 Find exultation following his steps
 Or boasts on his lips; he left his kinsmen 40
 And friends scattered over the field,
 Butchered to silence, and abandoned his son
 On the heaps of the slain, an untried soldier
 Cut into failure. No, the crafty
 Grey-beard had no need to be vain, and no more 45
 Had Anlaf: watching their wreck of an army
 Nothing welled up into laughter
 Or pride that, after amusing themselves
 With Edward's sons, they'd proved that they
 And theirs were England's best for the job 50
 Of battle, the crashing of standards, the thrust
 Of spears, the cut and slash of dagger
 And sword. They fled in their mail-clad ships,
 The blood-stained Northmen, over a deep and noisy
 Sea to Dublin, back again 55
 To Ireland, ashamed, disgraced. But those ashes
 Of defeat were the sweetest taste of victory
 In the brothers' mouths, Wessex king
 And Wessex prince, returning home
 Together. They left a gift of dismembered 60
 Corpses to the horny beak of the black-plumaged
 Raven, and the grey-feathered eagle, splashed white
 On his tail, to the greedy war-hawk and the grey-flanked
 Forest wolf, a feast of carcasses
 For lovers of carrion meat. No carnage 65
 Had ever been bloodier, in any battle
 Fought anywhere on this island, say the books
 Of the old philosophers, not since the Angles
 And Saxons⁹ arrived in England out of
 The East, brave men trying a broad 70
 And dangerous sea, daring warriors
 Who swept away the Britons,¹⁰ seized
 The land and made it theirs alone.

⁸ Constantín mac Áeda was king of Scots from around 900 until his retirement in 943. He died in 952.

⁹ The Angles and Saxons were component groups of the Anglo-Saxons.

¹⁰ The Britons were Brittonic-speakers (speakers of a language akin to modern Welsh). By this time they were based in Wales, Cornwall, Brittany and the northern kingdom of Cumbria.

