Candidates for this exam are expected to show complete knowledge of the core reading list, both the primary readings and the secondary criticism, thus being able to discuss both the works themselves and their evolving status in the field. Additionally, they must prepare one specialization relating to their proposed PhD dissertation area. This reading list is long and diverse, and preparation for the exam should be undertaken with the help of the examination chair and examination committee.

**Core List (Primary Works)**

Note: Several of the works listed are not in Middle English but in other European vernaculars, Anglo-Saxon or Latin. These may be read in translation. Works listed in the core list will not be repeated in the specialization lists, though they may be relevant to them.

Augustine, *Confessions*
Aquinas, *On Nature and Grace*
*Beowulf*
*The Song of Roland*
Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*
*The Book of Margery Kempe*
Geoffrey Chaucer
  *Troilus and Criseyde*
  *Canterbury Tales*
As a minimum, candidates should read the frequently anthologized tales (for instance, the ones in the Norton Critical Edition, ed. Kolve and Olson), and all of Fragments I, III, and VII in *The Riverside Chaucer* (ed. Benson, 3rd ed.).
Dante Alighieri, *Commedia*
Guillaume de Lorris, *Roman de la rose* [first part, excluding Jean de Meun’s continuation]
*Sir Orfeo*
William Langland, *Piers Plowman* (B-Text)
Thomas Malory, *Morte Darthur*
*Pearl*-Poet, *Pearl, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*
York Cycle
Anonymous Middle English lyrics
Core List (Criticism)

Note: Some of the scholarship below is introductory and comprehensive, providing overviews of fields within medieval studies, or critical history; some are monuments in particular fields, such as Chaucer studies or exegesis; some are influential recent monographs that have shaped recent critical dialogue. It is important here to get an overall sense of the history of the discipline and the place of important scholars and schools within it.

Monographs and Essay Collections

David Aers, ed., *Culture and History 1350-1600* (1992)

John Bossy, *Christianity in the West 1400-1700* (1985)


Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (1990)


*Literary Practice and Social Change in Britain, 1380-1530* (1990), ed. Lee Patterson


Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy* (1983)

—, *Listening for the Text: On the Uses of the Past* (1990)


Anthologies and Histories


Specialization 1: Chaucer and Court Poetry

Texts

Geoffrey Chaucer

*The Canterbury Tales* (all)

*The Book of the Duchess*

*The House of Fame*

*The Parliament of Fowls*

*The Legend of Good Women*
Short poems

Giovanni Boccaccio, *Il Filostrato*
Petrarch, *Canzoniere*
Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *Poetria Nova*

John Gower, *Confessio amantis*

Thomas Usk, *The Testament of Love*

Criticism
Elaine Tuttle Hansen, *Chaucer and the Fictions of Gender* (1992)
Jill Mann, *Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire* (1973)
Charles Muscatine, *Chaucer and the French Tradition* (1965)
Lee Patterson, *Chaucer and the Subject of History* (1991)

**Specialization 2: Langland and the Piers Plowman Tradition**

**Texts**
[Note: B Text is in core list]
*Pierce the Ploughman’s Crede*
*Richard the Redeless*
*Mum and the Sothsegger*

**Criticism**
Anne Middleton, “William Langland’s ‘Kynde Name’” in Lee Patterson, ed., Literary Practice and Social Change in Britain, 1380–1530 (1990)
Maureen Quilligan, The Language of Allegory: Defining the Genre (1992)
William Elford Rogers, Interpretation in Piers Plowman (2002)
James Simpson, Piers Plowman: An Introduction to the B-Text (1990)
Nicolette Zeeman, Piers Plowman and the Medieval Discourse of Desire (2006)

Specialization 3: Fifteenth Century Authorship

Texts
Thomas Hoccleve
  La Male Regle
  The Regiment of Princes
  Series
  Minor Poems

John Lydgate
  The Temple of Glas
  The Siege of Thebes
  The Troy Book (selections, ed. R Edwards for TEAMS 1996)
  The Minor Poems

Christine de Pizan, Book of the City of Ladies

Charles d’Orleans, Fortunes Stabilnes

Pearsall, ed., Chaucer to Spenser, an Anthology (1999)

Criticism

Seth Lerer, Chaucer and his Readers (1993)
Nigel Mortimer, John Lydgate’s Fall of Princes: Narrative Tragedy in its Literary and Political Contexts (2005)
**Specialization 4: Drama**

**Texts**
- *The Castle of Perseverance*
- Chester Cycle
- Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*
- Digby *Conversion of St Paul*
- Digby *Killing of the Children*
- Digby *Mary Magdalen*
- *Everyman*
- *Jeu d’Adam*
- *Mankind*
- Henry Medwall, *Fulgens and Lucre*
- N-Town Cycle
- Wakefield Cycle
- *Wisdom*

**Criticism**
- Clifford Davidson, *Technology, Guilds, and Early English Drama* (1996)

**Specialization 5: Devotional Writing**

**Texts**
- *Ancrene Wisse*
- Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*
- *The Ayenbite of Inwyt*
- Clemence of Barking, *Life of St Catherine*
The Early South English Legendary
Hali Meidenhad

Walter Hilton
  Scale of Perfection
  Mixed Life

Julian of Norwich, Revelations (Long Version)

The Life of Christina of Markyate

Lollard writing
  The Trial of William Thorpe
  Norwich Heresy Trials
  Prologue to the Wycliffite Bible
  Lantern of Light
  Lollard Sermons (ed. Cigman, EETS)

Nicholas Love, Mirrour of the Blessed Life of Jesu Crist

Pearl-Poet
  Cleanness
  Patience

Richard Rolle
  Form of Living
  Fire of Love

Criticism
Denise Baker, Julian of Norwich’s “Showings”: From Vision to Book (1994)
Anne Clark Bartlett, Male Authors, Female Readers: Representation and Subjectivity in Middle English Devotional Literature (1995)
Sarah Beckwith, Christ’s Body: Identity, Culture and Society in Late Medieval Writings (1993)
Theresa Coletti, Mary Magdalene and the Drama of Saints: Theater, Gender, and Religion in Late Medieval England (2004)
Miri Rubin, Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture (1991)
Lynn Staley, Margery Kempe’s Dissenting Fictions (1994)
Nicholas Watson, Richard Rolle and the Invention of Authority (1991)
Specialization 6: Romance

Texts

Middle English Romances (Arthurian)
*The Awntyrs of Arthur*
*The Prose Merlin*
*Stanzaic Le Morte Arthur*
*Alliterative Morte Arthur*
*Golagrus and Gawain*
*The Avowyinge of Arthur*
*Ywain and Gawain*
*The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnell*
*Libeaus Desconus*

Middle English Romances (Non-Arthurian)
*Havelock the Dane*
*King Horn*
*Sir Gowther*
*Sir Isumbras*
*Amis and Amiloun*
*The Tale of Gamelyn*
*Sir Beues of Hamtoun*
*Le Bone Florence of Rome*
*Octovian*

Continental Romance
*Chrétien de Troyes, Romances*
*Gottfried von Strassburg, Tristan and Isolt*
*Marie de France, Lais*
*Wolfram von Eschenbach, Parzifal*

Criticism
*W. J. R. Barron, English Medieval Romance* (1987)
*Susan Crane, Insular Romance* (1987)
Women and Medieval Epic: Gender, Genre, and the Limits of Epic Masculinity, ed. Sara S. Poor and Jana K. Schulman (2007)

Specialization 7: Historiography

Texts

Chronicle and History
Augustine of Hippo, *City of God*
Paulus Orosius, *Seven Books Against the Pagans*
The Battle of Agincourt: Sources and Interpretations, ed. Anne Curry (2000)
*Brut* chronicles (ed. Brie, EETS)
Froissart, *Chronicles*
Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*
Gesta Henrici Quinti, trans. Frank Taylor and John S. Roskell (1975)

Romances
Alexander and Dindimus
The King of Tars
Richard Coer de Lyon
The Siege of Jerusalem
The Siege of Melayne
Sir Ferumbras
The Sowdone of Babylon
The Siege of Jerusalem
Titus and Vespasian
The Wars of Alexander

Criticism
Robert W. Hanning, *The Vision of History in Early Britain from Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (1966)
Lee Patterson, *Negotiating the Past: The Historical Understanding of Medieval Literature* (1987)
—, *Chaucer and the Subject of History* (1991)

**Specialization 8: Travel Writing**

**Texts**

*The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres*
Gerald of Wales: *Itinerarium Cambriae, Descriptio Cambriae, Expugnatio Hibernica*
Jean de Joinville, *The Life of Saint Louis*
John of Plano Carpini, *History of the Mongols*
*The Journal of Friar Odoric*
*The Journey of William of Rubruck*
*Mandeville’s Travels*
*The Travels of Marco Polo*
Geoffrey de Villehardouin, *The Conquest of Constantinople*

**Criticism**

Maria Rosa Menocal, *The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History* (1987)
David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (1996)
Specialization 9: Scots Literature

Texts
John Barbour, The Bruce
Blind Harry, The Wallace
Gavin Douglas
   Palace of Honour
   Aeneid (minimum: Books 1, 13)
William Dunbar
   The Treatise of the Two Married Women and the Widow
   The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedy
   The Golden Targe
   Lament for the Makaris
   The Thrissill and the Rois
Golagrus and Gawain
Robert Henryson
   The Moral Fables
   Orpheus and Eurydice
   The Testament of Cresseid
Richard Holland, Bake of the Howlat
James I, The Kingis Quair
The Taill of Rauf Coilyear
Andrew Wyntoun, Chronicle

Criticism
Priscilla Bawcutt, Gavin Douglas: A Critical Study (1976)
   —, Dunbar the Makar (1992)
Louise Olga Fradenburg, City, Marriage, Tournament: The Arts of Rule in Late Medieval Scotland (1991)
Douglas Gray, Robert Henryson (1979)
The History of Scottish Literature, ed. R. D. S. Jack ed al. (1988)
Robert L. Kindrick, Henryson and the Medieval Arts of Rhetoric (1993)
*The Renaissance in Scotland*, ed. A. A. MacDonald et al. (1994)