

Generic guidelines for answering the new form of assessment (one-week, open-book) in SAME in Trinity Term 2020

These guidelines are drawn up in response to questions from MSc/MPQ students in SAME. Please remember that the advice contained in these points is generic. Therefore, some parts of it may be more applicable to your particular circumstances than others.

1. Past papers are a guide to the kinds of question that will be asked, but they should not be used to try and predict which topics will or will not be covered in the questions this year.
2. You will be given a choice of nine questions and are expected to answer two. Each answer must be no more than 2,500 words in length. You will have one week in which to complete the assessment.
3. Treat the essays like two tutorial essays (or other essays where you have not had to write tutorial essays): make sure that you answer the precise question that has been asked and not the question that you believe should have been asked or that you would like to have been asked. However, it is usually a good idea to explain in your opening paragraph how you understand the question, what ambiguities may or may not be present in the way the question is framed, and how you intend to deal with those and how you propose to answer it.
4. Do not repeat verbatim essays that you have written in the past, whether assessed or not. Simply cutting and pasting from earlier essays is unlikely to help you to answer the question.
5. Avoid the temptation to use long quotations from your sources, which will rapidly use up your word count. Keep quotations short, judiciously chosen, and relevant.
6. Questions sometimes take the form of a quote by a specific author. Such quotes are meant to be prompts to stimulate your own thinking; do not therefore feel obliged to seek out the source and origin of the quotation or indeed to discuss the particular author at great length.
7. The 2,500-word limit is a maximum, not a target. If you feel you have answered the question fully and appropriately illustrated your answer with pertinent examples and used only 2,000 words to do so, you should stop and not pad the essay out unnecessarily.
8. The references will not be counted in the 2,500 words, but footnotes (if you use them) will be.
9. All essays will be run through Turnitin to check for plagiarism.
10. You can draw on any of the material that you have been taught in any of the lecture courses, tutorials, classes, or seminars; it would be advisable to draw on at least *some* of it: answers that bear no relationship at all to anything taught on the course, are unlikely to attract high marks. Contrariwise, answers that *only* summarize what others have said, without adding anything at all of the candidate's own thoughts or synthetic imagination, are also unlikely to score particularly highly.
11. The marking conventions have not changed and are available on the website: <https://www.anthro.ox.ac.uk/examination-conventions-and-marking-criteria>
12. The marking criteria for Timed Written Examinations will apply to the new one-week open book assessment.