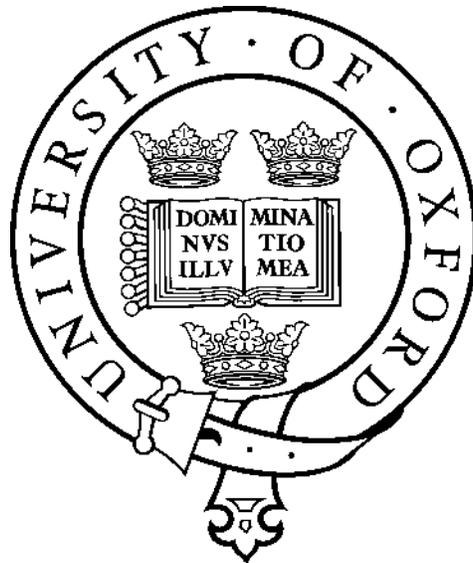


UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

**FACULTY OF MEDIEVAL AND MODERN
LANGUAGES**



Information for the Preliminary Course in

CZECH (with Slovak)

2018/2019

This handbook gives subject-specific information for your Preliminary course in Czech (with Slovak). For general information about your studies and the faculty, please consult the Faculty's Undergraduate Course Handbook (<https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site/humdiv:modlang>)

THE PRELIMINARY COURSE

First-year teaching in Czech language and literature – in the form of university lectures, college classes / seminars and tutorials – is coordinated by:

Dr James Partridge (Departmental Lecturer in Czech and Slovak).

Dr Vanda Pickett (Czech Language Tutor)

The Czech language at Oxford is taught as a Beginner' language, i.e. no previous knowledge of Czech is required. Students will receive around three hours of intensive Czech language classes per week. Any native speaker or other more advanced student of the language will be set more demanding language work during the year.

First-year students also attend a weekly lecture on Czech literature and seminars on Czech literary texts. These continue throughout the year. There will also be tutorials for essays on Czech literature; these tutorials are usually held in Hilary and Trinity Terms. The final timetable of classes in Michaelmas Term will be arranged at a meeting held towards the end of Freshers' Week (= Noughth Week).

▀ Extensive local and external web resources for students of Czech and Slovak language and literature are available at: <http://czech.mml.ox.ac.uk>

Further details about the papers to be taken in the Preliminary Examination and set texts for literature are given below, along with an introductory reading list, recommended dictionaries, textbooks and some other background reading.

LANGUAGE

ORAL

There is no formal oral examination, but in order to pass the Preliminary Examination in Czech (with Slovak), colleges are required to present, for each candidate, a certificate of attendance and active participation in oral classes. Candidates must attend and actively participate in no fewer than eight oral classes in Czech before the end of the fourth week of the Trinity Term of their first year. The classes may consist of reading aloud with attention to proper pronunciation and intonation of Czech, and/or discussion of passages dealing with issues in contemporary Czech culture. The Senior Tutor of each candidate's college will be asked to submit to the Undergraduate Studies Administrator, Modern Languages, Examinations Office, 41 Wellington Square, a certificate endorsed by the Senior Tutor and a Modern Languages Tutor (the latter acting on behalf of the sub-faculty and Russian and Slavonic Languages) stating that they have attended, and participated in, the required number of classes. Candidates who fail to satisfy this requirement for the June examination shall have their mark for each of the two written language papers in Czech reduced by ten marks. Candidates for a language paper in the September examination (re-sits) who have not previously in that academic year satisfied the attendance requirement will be examined *viva voce* to demonstrate at least basic competence in spoken Czech. Certification is required by noon on the Friday of 5th week of Trinity Term.

Two Czech language examination papers are taken by all students at the end of the first year (whether beginners or not), as follows:

PAPER I (Prose Composition and Grammar Sentences):

- One passage (in English) to translate into either Czech or Slovak
- Ten sentences, designed to test knowledge of grammar, to translate into either Czech or Slovak

PAPERS IIA & IIB (Unseen Translation from Czech):

- Both papers consist of a translation from Czech of a prose passage (c. 300 words).

The level of language work set in the examination primarily aims to cater for Beginner candidates.

LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS & DICTIONARIES

▀ The primary language textbook we use throughout the degree in Czech (with Slovak) is: **James Naughton, *Colloquial Czech* (Routledge, 2010)**. Please ensure that you obtain the MOST RECENT (3rd) edition. You are also strongly encouraged to acquire this concise

grammar of Czech for reference purposes: **James Naughton, *Czech: An Essential Grammar* (Routledge, 2005)**. Other language-learning materials will be provided as necessary.

Dictionaries

You will also need to acquire and use more than one dictionary. No single dictionary covers every requirement for reading and translation, and although online dictionaries and translation tools are useful they are NOT an adequate replacement for the dictionaries listed below.

Recommended dictionaries are:

- Josef Fronek, *Anglicko-český a česko-anglický slovník* (Prague: Leda, 2012). [Handy noun tables, less good for verb aspectual pairs.]
- Josef Fronek, *Velký česko-anglický slovník* (Praha: Leda, 2013). [Large, Czech-English.]
- Josef Fronek, *Velký anglicko-český slovník* (Praha: Leda, 2016). [Large, English-Czech.]
- Ivan Poldauf, *Velký česko-anglický slovník* (Čelákovice: WD Publications / New York: Hippocrene Books, 2000, etc.). [Various printings, excellent larger Czech-English volume, very good for identifying aspectual pairs. However, it can be difficult to find.]
- Ivan Poldauf et al., *Anglicko-český česko-anglický slovník* (Prague: SPN, 1994, etc.). [Older but useful two-way dictionary with good information on aspectual pairs.]
- *Česko-anglický slovník spojení: podstatné jméno a sloveso / Czech-English combinatory dictionary: noun and verb*, ed. Aleš Klégr, Petra Key, Norah Hronková (Praha: Karolinum, 2005).

[Lingea – Anglicko-český slovník](#) is perhaps the most detailed two-way dictionary that is freely available online at present. It can often detect headwords when searching from their inflected forms and when you type words without their diacritics.

This single-volume monolingual dictionary is also very useful for examples of usage:

- Josef Filipec et al., *Slovník spisovné češtiny pro školu a veřejnost*, 2nd ed. (Prague: Academia, 1994).

Phrase books or guide books may also be useful: Berlitz, Collins, Rough Guide, Oxford Photo Dictionary English – Czech, etc.

▣ For more information on other useful textbooks and Czech language websites, please see the Language Resources page at:

<http://czech.mml.ox.ac.uk/czech-and-slovak-language-resources>

LITERATURE

Two Czech literature papers are also taken at the end of the Preliminary year, one devoted to the Czech short story, the other to Czech drama and poetry.

PAPER III (Prescribed Texts I):

In Paper III the focus is on close study of several Czech short stories. The **exam** consists of three commentaries on passages taken from the following set texts (where possible, a recent edition is shown, but any edition may be used):

- **Milan Kundera**, 'Falešný autostop' in *Směšné lásky* (Brno: Atlantis, 1991); translated as 'The Hitchhiking Game' in *Laughable Loves* (Faber & Faber, 2000).
- **Jan Neruda**, 'Doktor Kazisvět' in *Povídky malostranské* (any edition, or see <http://czech.mml.ox.ac.uk/czech-and-slovak-literature-resources#2>); translated as 'Doctor Spoiler' in *Prague Tales* (CEU Press, 1993), or 'Doctor Vandal' in *Tales of the Little Quarter* (Heinemann, 1957).
- **Ota Pavel**, 'Zlatí úhoři' in *Zlatí úhoři* (Československý spisovatel, 1988).
- **Bohumil Hrabal**, 'Pábitelé' in *Automat svět* (Mladá fronta, 1966); in *Pábení: Sebrané spisy Bohumila Hrabala*, sv. 4 (Pražská imaginace, 1993); translated as 'Palaverers' in *The Death of Mr. Baltisberger* (Northwestern UP, 2010, or Abacus Books, 1990).

PAPER IV (Prescribed Texts II):

For Paper IV we study two works of nineteenth-century poetry and at least one twentieth-century play. The **exam** consists of two essays and one commentary on passages taken from the following set texts:

Poetry:

- **Karel Jaromír Erben**, *Kytice z pověstí národních* (1853).
- **Karel Hynek Mácha**, *Máj* (1836).

[Texts are available at <http://czech.mml.ox.ac.uk/czech-and-slovak-literature-resources>]

Drama:

- **Karel Čapek**, *R.U.R.* (any edition); translated in *Four Plays: R.U.R., The Insect Play, The Makropulos Case, The White Plague*, by Peter Majer & Cathy Porter (London: Methuen, 1999), or by Claudia Novack-Jones in *Toward the Radical Center: a Karel Čapek Reader* (Highland Park, 1990).
- **Václav Havel**, *Vyrozumění* (e.g. in the volume *Hry*), trans. Vera Blackwell as *The Memorandum* (any edition).

Czech Literature

During the Preliminary year, while students are developing their Czech language skills, they are encouraged to read a broad selection of Czech literature in translation. Many translations of books by major authors such as Bohumil Hrabal, Josef Škvorecký, Václav Havel, Milan Kundera, Karel Čapek etc. are readily available, along with numerous less well-known authors. A bibliography of Czech and Slovak literature in translation is available at:

<http://czech.mml.ox.ac.uk/czech-and-slovak-literature-translation>.

▀ Here are some critical works and general surveys of Czech literature you will find helpful during the Preliminary year. Please also see the **FHS Handbook** for detailed reading lists of authors and works that are typically covered by students from the end of the Prelim year through to the end of their degrees:

In English

- Robert Porter, *An Introduction to Twentieth-Century Czech Fiction: Comedies of Defiance*. [It is recommended that you purchase this very useful book as we will use extensively on this course.]
- Jiří Holý: *Writers under Siege: Czech literature since 1945* (Brighton: Sussex AP, 2008).
- Peter Hruby, *Daydreams and Nightmares: Czech Communist and Ex-Communist Literature 1917–1987*.
- Arne Novák, *Czech Literature*, trans. Peter Kussi. [An abridged translation of Novák's *Přehledné dějiny české literatury* and still one of the few works in English to cover pre-19th century literature in detail.]
- Milada Součková, *The Czech Romantics* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1958).
- René Wellek, *Essays on Czech Literature* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1963).

In Czech

- Lubomír Machala, *Panorama české literatury (Literární dějiny od počátků do současnosti)* and *Panorama české literatury (2) po roce 1989*. [Useful and short overviews; suitable for early learners of Czech.]
- *Lexikon české literatury* ed. V. Forst (Prague: Academia, 1985-2008). [The standard modern reference work on Czech literature.]

Online encyclopaedias and anthologies

- *Slovník české literatury*: <http://www.slovníkceskeliteratury.cz/>
- *Slovník básnických knih*:
<http://ucl.cas.cz/edicee/prirucky/slovníkove/140-slovník-basnickykh-knih>

- *Čeští spisovatelé počátku 19. a 20. století:*
<http://ucl.cas.cz/edicee/prirucky/slovnikove/141-cesti-spisovatele-19-a-pocatku-20-stoleti>

When drawing up this handbook we have tried to be as accurate and clear as possible. The texts prescribed for study for individual papers are now listed in this handbook.

The Examination Conventions, detailing the structure of each examination paper, including rubrics, are also available as a separate document at:

<https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site:/humdiv:modlang:czech:prelims>

The revised edition of the University's Examination Decrees and Regulations lists the examination papers and their permitted combination for your degree course. (For further details, refer to the handbook and the examining conventions.) See:

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2018-19/peinmodelang/studentview/>

Courses and regulations are constantly under review, so always check also with your college tutor to confirm what is written here and in the Examination Conventions.

In addition, do not hesitate to ask for clarification about the course from any member of the Sub-Faculty who is lecturing to you or tutoring you; we will always do our best to help.

Last revised: May 2018