



NEW COLLEGE  
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

1 July 2022

Dear Student,

Congratulations on your offer of a place to read French at New College! We very much look forward to seeing you in Oxford in October, and hope you're excited to get started. We write now to give you some preliminary information about the Literature Papers in French Prelims (first year), so that you can set about getting hold of the books and reading them before you arrive in October.

We *strongly* recommend that you read all of the works once through before arriving in Oxford. We'll move swiftly through the syllabus from 3<sup>rd</sup> Week of Michaelmas onwards, and your day-to-day workload will make it impractical to read each work as you come to study it. You'll also find that you get a lot more out of the texts on a second and even third reading, so allowing yourself the time for that luxury is an excellent idea.

You must buy (or very long-term borrow) physical copies of all of the texts. Kindle versions and e-books are not acceptable. Where possible you should buy the recommended editions, since this makes group work much easier, and in all cases you should buy an edition by a reputable French publisher (Gallimard, Garnier-Flammarion, Livre de Poche and so on); random and (especially) print-on-demand editions from the internet will often be defective. The easiest way to find the books is on French internet sites (amazon.fr, fnac.com, chapitre.com and so on). Blackwells in Oxford also tend to stock set texts for University courses, though their foreign language section has dwindled regrettably in recent years.

Inevitably, you'll consult many online resources for your language work. It's still worth investing in a physical French grammar, however, as well as in at least one really good dictionary. For grammars, Roger Hawkins and Richard Towell, *French Grammar and Usage* (Routledge) is accessible and can be purchased with a companion workbook. Serious aficionados may find Monique L'Huillier, *Advanced French Grammar* (Cambridge), dry but more comprehensive. We strongly advise you to have the latest Collins-Robert French Dictionary or the Oxford-Hachette dictionary. Be sure to get the full-size one, and not a 'compact', 'concise' or 'pocket' version. You should also consider investing in a monolingual French dictionary; *Le Petit Robert* is the best single-volume example.

Happy reading, and we look forward to seeing you in October.

Dr Andrew Counter  
Fellow and Tutor in French

Dr Vittoria Fallanca  
Career Development Fellow in French



### Modern Languages, First Public Examination ('Prelims'): Literature in French

All French students at New College will be studying four papers in first year (Prelims). (French Sole students study others, about which they'll be informed separately.) The first two are language papers: Paper I (French Grammar, Translation, and Summary) and Paper II (Unprepared and Prepared Translation into English); these will be explained to you in more detail when you arrive.

The literary element of the Prelims course in French is made up of two papers, numbered III and IV. For Paper III, you read four short texts, and write a commentary on a passage from three of the four in the exam. Paper IV is an introduction to the study of prose fiction, for which you read four longer works, and write an essay about any three of them in the exam. The set texts for each paper are listed below, and it's *essential* to have read these before you arrive at College in Michaelmas.

In some cases, we have suggested which editions we think most useful. In all cases, you should buy serious scholarly editions by reputable French publishers (this usually means Gallimard or Garnier-Flammarion). Do *not* buy cheap, print-on-demand versions, which are often inaccurate and incomplete.

#### Paper III: Short Texts

Montaigne, 'Des cannibales' from *Essais I*, recommended edn: *Essais: 'Des cannibales' et 'Des coches'*, ed. by Michel Tarpinian (Paris: Ellipses, 1998)

Jean Racine, *Phèdre*, recommended edn: *Phèdre*, ed. by Raymond Picard (Paris: Gallimard Folio, 2015)

Paul Verlaine, *Romances sans paroles*, recommended edn: *Romances sans paroles*, ed. by Arnaud Bernadet (Paris: Flammarion, 2018 [2012])

Marie NDiaye, *Papa doit manger*, (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 2003).

#### Paper IV: French Narrative Fiction

Anon., *La Chastelaine de Vergy*, in *Nouvelles courtoises*, ed. S. Méjean-Thiolier and M-F. Notz-Grob, (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1997).

Pierre Choderlos de Laclos, *Les Liaisons dangereuses*, ed. Pomeau (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1996).

George Sand, *Indiana*, ed. Béatrice Didier (Paris: Folio Gallimard, 1984)

Maryse Condé, *Traversée de la mangrove* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992)