



June 2026

### **Beginners' German and History**

The Modern Languages tutors are delighted that you have been offered a place to read Modern Languages at St Hilda's, and we look forward to welcoming you in October.

The reading list with the set texts and a syllabus for the first-year Beginners' German course (called Prelims) is attached, including the course books you will need for your language-learning. For the first year, the aim of your language course will be to provide you with a sound basis in German grammar, writing, and speaking, and you will have language classes most days of the teaching week. The *Kurs DaF* textbooks will be used to support the first-year course, with the series combining all the levels (A1-B1) you will cover into a single coursebook and a single workbook.

You will begin with the study of the set texts and film in Hilary Term, and it is expected that you will at that stage still be dependent on reading the recommended English translations. We advise you to buy and read the set literary texts in translation **before you arrive** in order to begin preparing yourself. By Hilary Term you will be encouraged to try to work with the English translations and the German texts in parallel when writing essays, as this will help you expand your vocabulary as well as giving you the insight into German as a literary language. You will have reading classes as part of your Beginners' German course to help you learn techniques of literary analysis with the original German text.

You should retain the receipts for your book purchases as you will be able to apply for a College book grant to claim back up to £60 when you arrive in October.

If you have any questions about reading or preparation, or if you have difficulty obtaining books, please do not hesitate to get in touch ([nicholas.jones@st-hildas.ox.ac.uk](mailto:nicholas.jones@st-hildas.ox.ac.uk)).

With best wishes,

Dr Nicholas Jones  
Fellow and Tutor in German



## Modern Languages Prelims (Beginners' German course)

Students will attend a pre-sessional course in order to prepare for the intensive language work leading up to the Preliminary examination. This pre-sessional course consists of an online course and a residential course. You need to have completed the online course by the time you start the residential course. You are advised to allow at least 14 days for completion of the online course, which will be available from 1 September. A letter with details about the online course and information on the residential course will be sent out to students in advance.

The first-year German for Beginners course, starting in Michaelmas Term, consists of four components: three will be focused on intensive language study, while the fourth will give students an opportunity to work on literature also studied by the post-A level cohort. The course for the three language papers (Papers I, II and III) is centrally organised and is specific to students of Beginners' German. The course for the literature paper (Paper IV) is organised and taught by the student's college.

For Paper IV, Beginners' German students will read three narrative works, initially primarily in translation. You will be expected to use the translation consistently in conjunction with the original, maximising the focus of your reading over time on the original German text. In addition, you will study one film, with subtitles, to learn the techniques of analysing cinematic works. The college-organised tutorials or classes on these works will bring together students from the Beginners' German group and the post-A-level group, and will focus on the German text. Alongside these tutorials or classes, your reading skills in German will be developed in a centrally organised class that will complement, and interact with, both the language papers and the literature/film paper.

The Preliminary Examination is taken at the end of the first year, and consists of the following:

### LANGUAGE

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<b>Paper BI</b>	Reading Comprehension, Essay and Grammar
	A) Reading comprehension exercise (in German) on a passage in German.
	B) One essay in German (250-400 words). A choice of questions will be set.
	C) Grammar exercises designed to test grammatical knowledge and the ability to apply it appropriately
<b>Paper BIIA</b>	Translation into German of a prose passage.
<b>Paper BIIB</b>	Translation from German of a prose passage in a modern literary register.
<b>Paper BIII</b>	An oral exam with a spoken part and a listening comprehension.

Books required for the language papers:

1. ***Kurs DaF A1–B1: Deutsch für Studium und Beruf. Kursbuch mit Audios und Videos inklusive Lizenzschlüssel allango (24 Monate)***. Hybride Ausgabe allango. Stuttgart: Klett, ISBN 978-3-12-676844-3.

2. **Kurs DaF A1–B1: Deutsch für Studium und Beruf. Übungsbuch mit Audios und Videos.** Stuttgart: Klett, ISBN 978-3-12-676845-0.
3. **Thematischer Basiswortschatz** Klett Verlag 2016. ISBN 978-3125195073

## LITERATURE

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### Paper BIV      Prose and film: Essays

All students of German, non-beginners and beginners, will study the prescribed prose texts and the prescribed film in Hilary Term. For the examination candidates will be required to write THREE essays on the prescribed works (selected from a choice of questions).

Prose texts and film prescribed for study (please be sure to get the prescribed editions):

1. Theodor Fontane, *Irrungen, Wirrungen* (1888) [Stuttgart: Reclam XL, 2021. ISBN 3150161215]  
Also: *On Tangled Paths*, trans. by Peter James Bowman (London: Penguin Classics, 2013)
2. Franz Kafka, *Die Verwandlung* (1912/1915) [Stuttgart: Reclam XL, 2021. ISBN 3150161096]  
Also: *The Metamorphosis*, trans. by Joyce Crick, in *The Metamorphosis and Other Stories* (Oxford World's Classics; Oxford: OUP, 2009)
3. Elfriede Jelinek, *Die Liebhaberinnen* (1975) [Reinbek: Rowohlt Taschenbuch, current edition. ISBN 978-3499124679]  
Also: *Women as Lovers*, trans. by Martin Chalmers (London: Serpent's Tail, 1994)]
4. Fatih Akin (dir.), *Aus dem Nichts* (2017)  
Also: *In the Fade*, with English subtitles [DVD: Curzon Artificial Eye, 2018]

Candidates on the beginners' course are encouraged to use the original German text as far as possible and to refer to it when quoting from the work, including in the Paper IV examination.