

## FINAL REPORT

**Project Title:** Progression and undergraduate learning and teaching in history

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### Abstract

We conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews with twelve university historians in a broad range of institutions to explore their perceptions of the meaning of, and practices associated with, the 'progression' of undergraduates through their history degree courses. We found considerable variation in how individual academics constructed the notion of 'progression'. Analysis of the interview data allowed us to discern two broad, though overlapping, models: progression as the process of becoming a practising historian and progression as becoming increasingly skilled as a 'general arts' student. This analysis has raised questions, topical at present, about the relationship between research, research culture and teaching that need further exploration.

### Context

The now ubiquitous term 'progression' is often received by readers as a neologism when it appears in official documents that promote the improvement of university teaching. But there has always been an assumption that we intend our students to improve over the three or four years it takes to complete a degree course. The current QAA benchmarking document (1998) for History asserts, 'we take it axiomatic that students must progress and that well-designed programmes facilitate their progression.' However, some of the contributors of *The practice of university history teaching* (2000) attempt to pin it down: Booth asserts the importance of ensuring that students themselves 'develop a clear sense of progression' (pp. 39 & 41); Hitchcock et al. connect degree structure to different 'principles of progression' (p.137); and, Peters et al. define levels of attainment that mark progression in both understanding the nature of history and in cognitive skills. Nevertheless, as our interviews demonstrated, the meaning of progression remains elusive.

### Research Aims and Objectives

Our main aim is to contribute to discussion about what constitutes progress in a History degree. We have done this by (a) focusing on academics' understandings of 'progression' when teaching, thinking about student learning, designing courses and setting assessments; and (b) by connecting this to educational theory about how students learn. The research objectives were:

1. To explore what constructions of progression through a degree can be found in history departments in the UK;
2. to search pedagogic literature for evidence about intellectual progression at university level; and
3. to develop models or taxonomies of history degree progression that both incorporate findings from literature and practices in History departments.

### Methodology and Methods

#### *Methodological Approach*

A strength of the project was that an historian and an educationist collaborated so that expertise in, and familiarity with, the fields of history, pedagogy and educational research could be exploited. The study is based on interviews with 12 university historians in different universities undertaken by the one of us (HB) who is an academic historian, so she was talking to colleagues about an issue of common professional concern. The major aim was to persuade these colleagues to think about and make explicit their conceptual understanding and everyday experience of 'progression' through a history degree. We agreed that the most appropriate methodological approach to take combined 'standpoint' approaches with the notion of interviews as conversations.

The advantage of revealing a 'standpoint' – in this case as a colleague of respondents – is that it allows a researcher to use herself as a 'fieldwork tool' (Van Maanen et al. 1989) drawing on professional knowledge, expertise and experience. HB occupies the same occupational 'life world' as the respondents, that is they share an understanding and experiences of the social world they discussed in interviews. This meant that rapport and confidence in being understood by the interviewer was easily established. In other words, it was more natural to be the researcher that Burgess describes as an ideal: 'a friend and a confidant who shows interest, understanding and sympathy in the life of the person with whom a conversation occurs' (1994, p.103). However, while we do think that the 'outside within' position can be informative (Bolak, 1997), there is also the danger that familiarity can inhibit insight (Rosaldo, 1989). To avoid this HB attempted to practise what Kvale (1996) refers to as 'deliberate naivete' (p.33) while regarding an interview as 'conversation with a purpose' (Burgess, 1994, p. 102) and the educationist (MM) undertook the preliminary analysis.

#### *Data Collection*

The selection of the 12 respondents then was based on who HB knew and on an attempt to represent a range of universities. Eight respondents worked in pre-1992 universities (two are 'Russell Group') and four in post-1992 universities. One of the universities was in Scotland and the rest in England. The interviews lasted between half an hour and one hour and took place between January and June 2002. The interviews were semi-structured, that is they were neither wholly open nor highly structured. The three main questions were: What do you understand by 'progression'?; What is the difference between a first and third year student (in reality/ideally); and how does a first year become a third year? (see Appendix 1 for the interview schedule). So while individual interviews took different routes, overall the same main issues were dealt with.

Throughout the interviews HB employed interviewing skills and techniques that encouraged respondents to reflect and elaborate on the answers to her questions. These included critical attention to what was being said so that appropriate follow-up questions were asked; being sensitive to whether new awareness and insights were emerging or whether contradictions were being expressed; and, staying unobtrusively in control of the direction of the interview. She aimed to elicit specific descriptions rather than general opinions and to make the interview a positive experience (Kvale, 1996).

#### *Analysis and Interpretation*

The interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed in full. The data was distilled to extract the essence of what was said and put into a table under headings that related to the main interview questions. Answers to the three main questions were compiled under the headings: the meaning of progression; 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years; promoting progression; and barriers to progression (Appendix 2).

Both researchers met to discuss the analysed results, focusing, in particular, on whether they could be interpreted in terms of models of progression.

#### **Results of Investigation**

First we shall present the results under the three main headings that structured the analysis. We shall then draw these findings together by presenting the two broad models of progression that we identified and connect this to educational literature.

#### ***The meaning of progression***

Progression was understood as honing 'skills' that included, on the one hand, basic writing, oral and group-work skills and, on the other, the higher cognitive skills of understanding the nature of evidence, argumentation, analysis and synthesis. The value and emphasis placed on each set and on also particular skills varied for individual academics. For example, some emphasise the task of learning to select, assimilate, organise and communicate large amounts of materials that must be read; while others focus on a wider range 'skills' that can be transferred for use in contexts other than learning history. Many expressed progression in

terms of 'the ability to do the subject' and this was often seen as developing the ability to adjudicate between and launch arguments about the interpretation of historical evidence.

### ***First and third years***

The interviewed academics were asked about the difference between first and third years to probe for more precise definitions of progression. It is striking that most of interviewees claim that students *do* progress. Most perceive the developmental leap to be between years 2 and 3, though a few see it between years 1 and 2. Despite this, a good number spoke of the elusiveness of progression pointing out that students progress at different rates and in different ways. Furthermore, it is not uncommon to teach and examine 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years together implying that progression does not reside in subject matter nor in the way that it is taught. The terms 'sophistication', 'efficiency', 'depth' were used to convey a meaning of progression that, again, suggests that a third year student has gradually developed the ability to manipulate the same subject matter better.

Some of the interviewed academics emphasise growing capacities which included: taking initiatives, making connections, critical understanding of accounts of the past, knowing a good argument and making one, and analysis and interpretation of sources. Here the teacher sees the outcome as developing 'craftmanship' (1), producing 'richer, more subtle and more complex historical writing' (4), or coming to have an 'autonomous voice' in relation to historical debates (7,11). Others highlight more concrete skills: giving presentations, communicating clearly, improving note-taking and writing, managing their time and becoming more confident generally. The focus here seems to be on students' ability, reached by the third year, to complete an extended, independent piece of work.

### ***Promoting Progression***

The interviews confirmed that reading, writing and discussion are the key vehicles for progression in history. Beyond that, though, there were wide variations in how much, at what level and in what depth was being required of students. It seemed to us that there were three main factors: academics' perceptions of how skilful students are when they arrive at university; the constraints on teaching imposed by resources and the environment; and, personal philosophies about what it means to teach history. We shall return to these in the next section on barriers to progression.

There were also references to the contested nature of university history teaching. Among the questions raised by our respondents were: Is it more 'difficult' for students to grasp the 'broad sweep' of history or to go into depth about one topic?; Should subject matter change as the degree proceeds or should topics be returned to in a more complex way?; Should students be introduced gradually to key debates, analysis and historiography or begin immediately?; Is it necessary to teach historiography /how to interpret primary sources at all?; What should be the balance between using primary and secondary sources?; and, How useful are lectures? Academics' preferred answers to these questions give clues as to what messages they will send their students about what is expected or hoped for by way of progress.

The shape and structure of courses in different institutions also reflect 'principles of progression' (Peters et al. 2001) and can vary considerably. The most obvious difference is between courses that have been 'modularised' and those that are not. But even within this, the predominant model is from general, outline courses to more in-depth with the dissertation, extended essay or special subject in the final year as the vehicle for, and the evidence of, capacities or skills developed over the three-year degree. Some emphasise increasing difficulty in the form of giving students more detail or material in courses/modules as the years proceed. It has become relatively unusual to set final examinations that demand an integration of knowledge and understanding accumulated through the course as a whole.

The table below collates the range of methods for enabling students make progress.

Table 1: Ways of promoting progression

1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3 <sup>rd</sup> year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading lists</li> <li>• Essays and feedback (in some places weekly and in some places diagnostic for referral for help with writing)</li> <li>• Help with writing</li> <li>• Oral presentations (sometimes peer assessed)</li> <li>• Historiography courses</li> <li>• Help reading articles</li> <li>• General or outline courses</li> <li>• Mark to 3<sup>rd</sup> year standard from the start</li> <li>• Seminar discussion</li> <li>• Documentary analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bibliographic/ research skills</li> <li>• Historiography course</li> <li>• More detailed courses</li> <li>• Extended essays</li> <li>• Students set essay titles</li> <li>• More articles</li> <li>• More in-depth primary sources</li> <li>• History placement</li> <li>• Study groups</li> <li>• Bullet point presentation</li> <li>• More student-led seminars</li> <li>• Exposure to different types of evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate w. tutor to design course</li> <li>• Independent team project</li> <li>• Primary source dissertation</li> <li>• Research projects and special subjects</li> <li>• Negotiated assessment</li> <li>• Seminars only</li> <li>• Revisit 1<sup>st</sup> year outline papers</li> <li>• Exams in final year only</li> <li>• Students set own essays</li> </ul>

Broadly speaking, pedagogic decisions had been made about: whether to give any explicit guidance with 'skills' (ranging from note-taking to how to 'gut' an academic article for its argument); whether to make this compulsory for all or offer it only to those students diagnosed in need of remedial help; what the balance between seminars and lectures should be (most agreed that students needed as much opportunity to discuss as possible); whether general, abstract outline courses are suitable for 1<sup>st</sup> year students; and, how may essays could be written and given feedback on. Of the other methods of assisting students, it is worth mentioning the practice, undertaken by two interviewees, of explicitly assessing students at 3<sup>rd</sup> year standard from the first year. This enabled both them and the students mark progress towards the standard expected (at different levels of the degree classification) of a third year student. This is an unusual practice that, while it clearly helps students to attain a clear sense of progress, is not easy to adhere to if 2<sup>nd</sup> year marks are part of the final mark. Indeed, both these academics are under pressure from their institutions to discontinue the practice and both of them regard this as a barrier to progression.

### **Barriers to Progression**

The following table shows the types of barriers to progression mentioned by the interviewed academics and how many times each is mentioned.

Table 2: Barriers to progression

1. Exigencies of students' lives	2
2. Paid work	4
3. Student effort	6
4. Student ability	2
5. Student writing	5
6. Legacy of school	2
7. Mixed ability	3
8. Curriculum structure/content	8
9. Class size	1
10. Lecturer attitude	1

It can be seen that barriers fall into the categories of attributes of students (1-6) and attributes of the learning and teaching environment (7-10). Academics may have some control over some of these factors in the sense that they may be able to act to ameliorate the hindering

effects of the barriers. We shall select for brief discussion those mentioned most often: student effort, student writing and curriculum structure/content.

Student effort is affected by myriad factors including taking on paid work for financial reasons and personal problems. There is an enormous educational literature on motivation that suggests that curriculum and teaching is influential. At present, the most accessible and promising derives from literature that suggests that the students of lecturers who aim to transform the world views of their students are more likely to be authentically engaged in the subject (Trigwell et al, 1990, Trigwell and Prosser, 2003).

This approach to thinking about motivating students connects, we think, to ways of constructing concern about the quality of student writing. From the study skills literature there is evidence that the only effective way of teaching academic writing is by embedding it within the teaching of the discipline. Hounsell's (1987) diagnosis of many of the difficulties that students with academic writing is 'disparate conceptions' of tutors and students of what is required in particular disciplines. He recommends: 'Attempts to improve the quality of students' essays [...] must spring from and turn upon dialogue about the nature of academic discourse.' It seems to us that there are two problems in pursuing this: in some universities there is little time and opportunity for such a dialogue; and, 'the nature of the academic discourse' in history is clearer in some of the accounts of curriculum and pedagogy we heard than in others. This leads us to consider the varied accounts of curriculum as a barrier to progression.

Inevitably, categorisation, as in the table above, simplifies the accounts that we heard. The category of 'curriculum' as a barrier in particular masks the different environments that academic historians are working in. One set of comments about the curriculum as a barrier, mainly from those working in post-1992 institutions, focused on 'too much lecturing' but was also linked to 'class size', 'mixed ability' and 'student ability'. There is little doubt that some colleagues are working in conditions less auspicious for 'progression' than others. They may be able to demonstrate as much 'value added' in terms of degree results as any university, but individual academics worry that students are not getting the attention they need to enable them to progress to the degree to which they are capable.

Another set of comments focused on 'modularisation'. From the perspective of these comments, too many courses, fragmentation and marks attached to all work act as barriers to: risk-taking; giving enough feedback; and, the depth of understanding needed to recognise and construct an historical argument. The motivation to 'modularise' was a political move which has not been systematically evaluated. More than a decade since the move began a few, usually elite, universities have not taken on the modular system and some seem to be moving back to courses of different kinds (for example, universities are quietly organising 'double modules').

### ***Models of progression***

Although the analysing of data from the interviews helped us discern some broad trends in the ways the academics think about progression, our final aim has been 'to develop models or taxonomies of history degree progression that both incorporate findings from literature and practices in History departments'. We identified two broad models of progression. It is important to note that we use the notion of 'model' as an 'ideal type' (Crotty, 1998) for heuristic purposes. In our case, the models derive from talking to colleagues about their teaching work, but they are presented as 'pure cases' and, in reality, most of the academics represent a hybrid of both models. We stress, too, that the choice to tend towards one or the other models depends, to some extent at least, on the context in which the teaching and learning is taking place. Furthermore, both models centralise analysis and argumentation, it is approaches and emphases that differ.

We have called the first model 'learning the discipline'. This model construes progression as learning to become a practising academic historian. Within this model the aim is for students to learn: to adjudicate between and make arguments; to analyse, synthesise and integrate of large amounts of material; and, to form their own well-informed opinions about historians' debates and questions. Creativity, originality and non-conformity are valued. The means of

progression highlighted are frequent formative essays and challenging discussion with tutor and peers. Progression is iterative: from the beginning students are introduced to documentary analysis, key debates and to different approaches to practising history.

Model two is called 'acquiring transferable skills'. We have used the term even though only two of the interviewed academics did so because it highlights the distinction between the models. This model includes a strong interest in students gaining a better knowledge and understanding of history, however progression tends to be constructed as increasing sophistication in the skills of a 'general arts' student: written, oral communication, group work and interpersonal skills; and, the development of a generally critical stance towards evidence. There is an emphasis on developing independence and the final year dissertation or special subject is the final vehicle for and evidence of this. An attempt is made to introduce opportunities to practice skills incrementally.

In order to illustrate the ways in which a leaning towards one or another model influences the accounts about teaching and learning that are made, we have selected two academics who represent purer versions of each model and reproduce below part of what each said about their intentions for their students.

#### *Acquiring transferable skills*

I think certain of the things associated with the third year and independent study work -and I don't just mean in the independent study unit that I teach but I mean independent study in terms of things like dissertation work as well- requires a fair amount of, you know, as the word suggests, independence. Students have to be able to, you know, get out of the University and track down their own sources and so on if they're doing a dissertation. And therefore to have the confidence to do that and that confidence does come to a large extent with maturity although, again, there are the exceptional students who have that capability right from the word go. And I think their interpersonal skills improve as they go through the programme. I think one of the things that I believe is important is to put them in situations where they're able either to demonstrate skills that they've got and apply them or at least have the opportunity to develop those skills. So, if you place them with an external client then they have to go out into a workplace and so on and negotiate with that client. So they may have been developing that independence, that maturity with age but then they would, the first time they've actually had to do something like that, be put on the spot in terms of going out to meet somebody, talk about a project, negotiate what they want to do with them, negotiate the assessment of it as well (8, I.121-135)

#### *Learning the discipline*

If you are teaching the third year you expect them to take more responsibility for their own arguments and also to be more self-conscious about where they are getting them from. I think one of the features of many students when they arrive is that there are things called "books" from which you get arguments [...] whereas by the third year there is a "monograph" and there is a seminar study or there is a distinction about the different levels of authority of the writers with whom we are engaging.[...] Now [by the third year] they have got a sense that articles are about arguments, that people have particular positions, that there may be such things as internal contradictions which are pressure points which they can intelligently apply their intelligence to. (11, I88-99)

There are two main inter-related points that we want to make about these two models. The first concerns the nature of knowledge and learning in higher education; and the second is about the relationship between teaching and research.

Williams Perry's (1999) seminal study of the intellectual development of students, although conducted almost fifty years ago at Harvard, can be considered still relevant. He spent a number of years interviewing students at Harvard and then wrote a scheme of the relationship between the students' intellectual endeavour and their development. The scheme proposes that potentially students take nine positions in a trajectory of intellectual growth from seeing the world dualistically (right or wrong, good or bad) through, in the middle positions, to seeing the world relativistically to, in the last three positions, developing and carrying through intellectual and ethical commitments. While there have been revisions of Perry's account

(Belenky, 1986, Gilligan, 1983), his relevance lies in the reminder of the usefulness of considering students' epistemological positions and how difficult it might be to change these.

In fact only one of the interviewed academics talked about first year students in terms of their understandings of the nature of historical knowledge:

'They have a [...] self consciously articulated vision of what history is which is semi-theoretical, inherited from school, which often contains concepts such as "bias" and a use of evidence that is so simplistic and reductive that actually they make it impossible to argue, because the first year student will tend to say [that] the way to understand what is going on is to say all historians are biased and therefore no one argument has more validity than another.' (11, l.104-109)

This academic wants his students to identify contradictory arguments and then gain the confidence *not to* 'render equal all contributions to historical debate' (11, l.111-112) and the capacity to 'resolve tensions and contradictions within debates' (11, l.114). This comes close to Perry's later positions in which the student begins to want to take a principled stand. These positions were echoed as desiderata by academics who lean towards the 'learning the discipline' model: 'They are learning what I consider to be the most important aspects – [to be] critical and autonomous' (7, l.70)

The point to be made here is that making a commitment to skill acquisition is not of the same order as commitment to what can be termed intellectual virtues (rigour, argument, autonomy and so on). The question which arises is whether it is desirable and possible to provide an environment which, as Perry puts it, 'supports students in the choice to use their competence to orient themselves through Commitments –as opposed to using it to establish a nonresponsible alienation'(p. 238)?

We believe that contemporary literature about higher education provides a partial answer to this question. Prosser and Trigwell's (1999) book *Understanding Learning and Teaching: The Experience of Higher Education* documents the research on relations between approaches to learning, conceptions of learning and the quality of what students learn. This account is of a 'nested hierarchy' at the lower end of which students conceive of learning as increasing the quantity of information and so approach their university subjects as knowledge to be accumulated; while at the higher end learning is seen as interpretative or transformative and students holding this conception search for meaning and its implications for themselves. The important practical relevance of this research is that students' intentions about learning subject matter can be influenced by their perceptions of the learning environment (Ramsden, 2003) over which academics have some control.

A second set of literature highlights the difficulties for students in moving towards a personal position within the academic discourse of their discipline. Generically, it refers to 'academic literacies' and is located within the debates about the improvement of student writing (Jones et al, 1999), but can apply to all products of student learning. It goes beyond study skills by taking account of issues of identity, power and authority in the teaching and learning of disciplines and argues that disciplines are discursive practices into which students need to be explicitly inducted (Lea, 1994; Lea and Street, 1998; Lea, 1999; Lee, 1997; Scott, 1994; Scott, 1999; Street, 1999). The emphasis is on the interaction between tutors and students as they strive to understand each other. Graff (2002) puts the academic literacies case succinctly:

Habits of thinking that are so familiar to academics that we hardly recognize them often seem counter-intuitive [to students]. These habits include the search for hidden meanings in texts and experience generally, the inclination to be contentious and to foment controversy, the tendency to make seemingly obvious assumptions explicit and the general obsession with searching for problems where often there do not seem to be any. The most productive way for teachers to help students cope with these unfamiliar academic habits is to identify these habits in class, inviting students to discuss them and even air their doubts about them. (p.27)

The focus on 'academic habits' brings us to the question of the research-teaching nexus that has a long history of controversy and a growing literature. It was the focus of a discussion at

a recent LTSN Subject Centre History Conference. In a briefing paper for the conference Booth (2003) describes the traditional view of research in history as 'archival enquiry and its publication in monographs and monographic articles'. He asks whether this is too narrow a view to make many links with teaching and whether it should be broadened to include classroom research, other types of products and a focus on process. From here, he also draws attention to the perceived intellectual divide between research and teaching. After proposing a clearer articulation of what the links are between teaching and research, he rejects the common formulation that the connection resides in the content and suggests that a more productive link would be the involvement of students in 'research-type enquiry'. He also questioned whether a 'non-researcher be a good [university] teacher?' but also asks 'whether the pronounced emphasis on research in our professional lives also have negative effects'. These are critically important questions at a time when the White Paper 'The Future of Higher Education' is suggesting the separation of teaching and research in some institutions.

We agree with Booth's conclusion that the links between research and teaching need to be made more explicitly and that an 'enquiry-led curriculum' seems to offer possibilities for students to achieve the position of being critical, autonomous and committed that we discussed above. However, we are less convinced that it is enough for university history teachers 'to be aware of current research findings'. We do not have space here to rehearse the different positions in the running debate about the research-teaching nexus. However, we are aware that some argue strongly that it is pedagogic knowledge and expertise that makes good teachers not discipline research (Gibbs, 2000) and also that there is a proliferation of the ways in which the research-teaching nexus is being configured (Jenkins et al., 2003). Cognisant of the debate, we believe that our data supports the view that the connection between research and teaching in history centres around the *doing* of history, the model of progression that emphasises 'learning the discipline, seems to us to offer more to students. Endorsing our view, Parker (2003) models disciplines as inclusive communities of practice and discourse and Breen and Lindsay (1999) found that sharing beliefs and values that derived from disciplines with their tutors motivate students.

## Conclusion

The project is small-scale and based on what 12 academics say about how students progress in history. Nevertheless, the data is rich and its contribution is that it indicates fruitful areas of further research and discussion. The need is to establish what is the overall nature and direction of history university teaching; to ascertain what effects this has on student learning; and, taking into account the increasingly diverse university contexts, to come to agreements about what constitutes 'good practice'. A useful larger-scale research project need not necessarily encompass many more departments but would go deeper and include documentary (including examples of student work) and observational evidence. The main questions the project has raised for us are:

- Is there a case for recasting progression as 'intellectual growth' in a discipline?
- Given evidence that barriers to progress are more prevalent in some universities than others, can the effects of this be mitigated by paying attention to curriculum and teaching?
- Given the differences in approach, has university history curriculum (structure, content sequence, methods and assessment) been subject to sufficient critical debate between colleagues within and across universities?
- The level and direction of student effort is in most cases the key to progression. Are there ways in which pedagogic literature about motivation can inform practical pedagogic decisions?
- Do the two models 'learning the discipline' and 'acquiring transferable skills' have descriptive and explanatory power?
- If so, how can the effects of these models on student learning be evaluated?
- Can different models of progression for different institutional contexts be justified?
- Does the 'learning the discipline' model depend on a thriving research culture?
- Is there a way of combining disciplinary and pedagogic research 'so that they are mutually informing and transforming' ? (Parker, 2002)



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**APPENDIX 1*****Interview Schedule for the Progression and Undergraduate learning and Teaching in History project***

- 1. What do you understand by 'progression'?**
- 2. What is the difference between a first and third year student (in reality/ideally)**

*Probe questions:*

- What should an undergraduate studying history be aiming for
- Can you describe an ideal history graduate?
- What is the main purpose of the third year syllabus/curriculum?
- What do first year students know and understand about history?
- Can you give a thumbnail sketch of the typical first year student?
- How much progress do students typically make in the second year?
- How do you most want them to change?

- 3. How does a first year student develop into a third year (in terms of what you have been saying)?**

*Probe questions:*

- The student's actions?
- The effects of staff, curriculum, assessment, environment
- What are the major challenges/obstacles?

## Appendix 2

Table 1 : Universities are numbered 1-12

	The Meaning of Progression	1st and 3 <sup>rd</sup> years	Promoting progression	Barriers to Progression
1	Dealing with knowledge through reading	1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> develop basic confidence and settle in at 3 <sup>rd</sup> year (dramatic change) have read widely <i>and</i> deeply; take initiatives; make connections; sensitive to nature of evidence; independence; learnt craftsmanship; 'growing sense of own creative power'; critical understanding of accounts of the past; reading books by other historians is central thing	1 <sup>st</sup> year explicit help w. notes, essays, reading, lists 2 <sup>nd</sup> year bibliographic research skills, criticising own work, 'something different is expected' designing course later; 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup> tutor works more collaboratively; independent team project; 'student driven progression' talk to each other and tutors by what has struck them, 'setting of [individual] agenda'; role of college tutor in knowing whether individual student progressing 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> years examined and taught together The rate and sequence of progression varies-so individualise. no primary sources for 3 <sup>rd</sup> yr	. Can lose direction for personal reasons
2	Development of analytic skills: assimilation and selection from large amounts of materials; organise coherently and communicate to different audiences	3 <sup>rd</sup> primary texts-analyse, interpret, write dissertation; Know more about more periods  1 <sup>st</sup> years don't read cover to cover-discrepancy between tutor/student expectations (addressing in skills programme); historiographical awareness	Oral presentations and peer assessment (judging others to think about themselves); Explain historiography; Get used to using large amounts of material- (1 <sup>st</sup> years taught to speed read); create an environment in which students learn, reflect and express; to do with 'construction of what I think a strong historian is'; feedback on written work; student effort and ability- not	Ability/effort (work) thinking time, class size, too much lecturing

		limited: the primacy of argument (over information and fact-at school)	everyone gets the advanced analytic skills  Getting students to think together takes imagination.	
3	A decent degree; increase of skills, understanding, knowledge	3 <sup>rd</sup> : see history is debates not facts; historiography, analysis of sources; group work, critical perspective on world, ability to analyse and interpret  1 <sup>st</sup> : no sense of 'sweep of history'; don't grasp the difference 'between fact and opinion' most do get better	transferable skills explicit; diagnostic essay and remedial help; primary source dissertation; core 'history of history' course (2 <sup>nd</sup> year); units at 'levels of difficulty' progressively harder- chronological grounding at the beginning; more detailed; train in groups; more extended essays; own essay titles; more articles, more in-depth use of primary sources.	Students better orally than writing- need specialist help with basic writing skills; 'long, fat tail' (2= 'short thin')  variability in progression =external circumstances-work (25-30 hours a week)  difficulties of mixed ability groups and get all through- level of debate low
4	'The ability to do the subject'-historians' questions about core issues  Need to understand how history works- (but historiography not essential)  transferable skills' = 'core values of an humanities degree': ability to research variety of topics; launch an argument; present it verbally and in writing'	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr return to 1 <sup>st</sup> yr. work and produce 'richer, more subtle and more complex historical writing'  1st years know about interesting bits; 3 <sup>rd</sup> 'a sense of history as a process of understanding a different culture and a different way of doing things'  Everyone reaches different levels at different times and has different ceilings  Can look at a batch of first	Marking according to 3 <sup>rd</sup> year standard from beginning but being stopped); The 'struggle' to get a students beyond 'narrative mode'  Why Oxbridge is a good system: individual feedback on a regular basis and encouragement to take risks	Structures do not allow risk taking and lots of feedback Better at oral presentation, better at working in groups- but modularization etc worked against argumentation and researching; fragmentation and marks attached to everything  Effect of quality of school teaching- frustration of teaching students whose written skills do not allow them to express themselves clearly  -

		year essays and gauge the potential for development and progression		
5	Historical skills at sophisticated level: 'maps of the past'	Yr.1 v. basic (2 Es perhaps no history) yr.2 historiography yr.3 crit. Courses from alternative angles; independent; adjuicate between accounts  big difference between 1 & 2-3 =refining	Research projects revising hypotheses as proceed or special subject Range of sources on Victorian countryside/city& compare and contrast 2 sources; historiography, research skills, primary sources, secondary sources, forms of oral presentation-some separation of skills yr1 diagnositic essay; yr2 argument yr3 extended piece of work Go out to a history-based workplace-6 weeks and report Students form own study groups Students need 'a great deal of nuturing and support' look @ draft essays' Explicitly draw attention to skills (which own degree at Ox. had not) e.g. empathy; Piece of role play Planning to use pdfs	Worries that potential 1sts are not getting attention
6	Increasing quantities of knowledge combined w. skills for doing history- 'deeper' & more efficient: research, primary/secondary, analysis, argument, evidence a 'rhetorical subject' about the construction of valid	extended arguments and independent work  Producing (a)'general arts student'=analysis, presentation; communication (b)tell, correct arguments, think intelligently, amusingly, entertainingly about the past'	Iterative practice (oral and written) and feedback (formal and informal), seminars, emulate lectures (how a valid argument is structured)-teaching is feedback and example  Shd know what is going on at GCSE and at A-level  Will be putting 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> years	Opposed to descriptors like 'to a certain extent..' doesn't think the words are there for 'infinite gradations'  barriers to progress=p/time work and modularisation= too many courses= confusing and

	<p>arguments backed by evidence</p> <p>About making people do the same things better</p>	<p>As progress more <u>efficient</u>: notes, read, argue, evidence, rhetoric, booklists- 'clipping through' (3<sup>rd</sup>) intellectual development =seeing main point (better and faster)</p> <p>Most progression in first year- they arrive with embryonic skills</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> years begin to make the effort</p>	<p>together for a lot but dissertation and special subject in 3<sup>rd</sup> year-more primary work – 2<sup>nd</sup> year tends to be understanding change and continuity over long periods of time not convinced that this is easier-cd just as well be 3<sup>rd</sup> year</p> <p>Mark all to honours level standard) to demonstrate progress- but under pressure to distinguish 2<sup>nd</sup>&amp;3<sup>rd</sup> and to not fail too many students</p>	<p>time management and can't motivate in same way</p> <p>spoon-fed at school; struggle with what is expected lack of habits of commitment, industry and application</p>
7	<p>Ability to analyse and synthesise</p>	<p>Can only measure development at individual student level=start different and progress at different rates)</p> <p>By end 1<sup>st</sup>:critical, self-conscious, aware of debate, synthesise: 'an echo of what they read'</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup>- maturity=taking selves seriously/realise have contribution to make- shd have autonomous voice engage with an historio-geographical debates-critical and autonomy are the most important; accept other people's views and then refute in a organised and logical manner- engage with the</p>	<p>Knock out what's been learned at school-to refuse hierarchies, 'despise any form of received authority" construct own hierarchies based on critical ability- most tend to conformity/acceptance of authority-provoke them</p> <p>Rigorous documentary analysis on every course; key debates, analysis and historiography from day 1</p> <p>project-long essay and dissertation=responsibility</p> <p>exercise of choice and self-reflexivity</p> <p>student competence, drive and attitudes of staff</p> <p>Not all historians believe in</p>	<p>Writing improves if you are conscious of what you are doing</p> <p>Rationale for curriculum not spelt out</p>

		<p>world in a positive, constructive but critical manner- a bonus if they learn to write English better</p> <p>the difference between a body of knowledge and an attitude towards a body of knowledge Employed because can summarise, analyse, produce a critical and personal viewpoint, cut through crap and produce something useful read a newspaper with a critical eye</p>	<p>historiography and critical approaches- it's generational</p> <p>interesting and positive attitude towards the acquisition of knowledge and a way of thinking about the world</p>	
8	<p>Sophistication knowledge (range and depth), skills (cognate-related plus 'personal transferable skills' e.g. IT-word process to databases, understanding)</p>	<p>3<sup>rd</sup> greater confidence, cope better with univ. life- a question of maturity better personal and relational skills and better knowledge and understanding of the past (can produce project-research-based) students are all students are different. Progression not easy to deliver or demonstrate complex e.g. broad is not easier than narrow want to develop both as historian and as person</p>	<p>Place more emphasis on things as the curriculum develops Negotiated assessments in 3<sup>rd</sup> year- independent study unit (1<sup>st</sup> compulsory and prescribed- 3<sup>rd</sup> more options)- could be a dissertation or work placement or group project Must attend balance between exam and coursework; esentations Tutorial arrangements help students write Believes n diversity and a multitude of experiences for students</p>	<p>Can get away with minimum and get a degree and that's their ambition</p>
9	<p>Each period of study builds on what studied previously,</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup>-sketchy knowledge of periods; no general sense of</p>	<p>Curriculum is for professional historians even if most will not</p>	<p>Can lack motivation/have problems but biggest inhibitor is</p>



	<p>working at increasing levels of sophistication</p> <p>Analytic skills, using documents, creating own arguments</p>	<p>development of history; limited skill using documents; ability to argue is weak- good at repeating and summarising but not making own by 3<sup>rd</sup> approximation of working like professional historian</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> year[seems he thinks nothing v. worthwhile is happening-perhaps learning to write] second year= making arguments; historical themes- you can tell the difference between a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year student very quickly- 3<sup>rd</sup> year can make arguments; think historically; ask intelligent questions; a sense of what is important (not knowledge of things)</p>	<p>become one</p> <p>A-level= specific so 1<sup>st</sup> year broaden horizons, cover new periods of time, ask questions (impact different depending on seriousness of student @ beginning a 2<sup>nd</sup> year broad range of competencies)</p> <p>Curriculum is the key: each year is taught v. differently- the kinds of problems deal with are different- they are meant to get more difficult as they move through levels- greater challenges reflected in assessment e.g. dissertation in 3<sup>rd</sup> year- keep 'raising the bar'</p> <p>In 3<sup>rd</sup> year don't lecture at all so more reading, thinking, talking in seminars (teach themselves)</p>	<p>'lack of intellectual strength'- some reach limit at level 2 cant see history in as complicated a way as we want them to-tend to believe in black and white truths- can't take on board the idea that historical truth is contingent on approach'; the write descriptively-narrative- don't analyse- lots of details no argument Lack of attitude rather than lack of opportunity that prevents progression</p>
10	<p>Using skills in more sophisticated ways</p>	<p>3<sup>rd</sup> years-appreciate different interpretations of history; critical evaluation of historians' versions; and,inform historiographic understandings with use of primary sources</p>	<p>More challenging activities as go through e.g. reading and essay out; presentation based on bullet points; move gradually towards independent learning; link progression to differentiation; preparation to make leaps e.g. for dissertation ( couldn't do in first year); 1st year talk about way historians use primary sources by 3<sup>rd</sup> using them Put in a lot of time with those who need a lot of help</p>	<p>Wide variety of experiences and background- try to get equal- doesn't know if 'dumbing down' or from barely write to capacity for first class degree Can't write ( can understand and can use primary sources, can't express it in writing Paid work- exigencies of life</p>

			<p>Use a range of sources and resources: film, oral history, going out</p> <p>Explicit use of 4 components in benchmarking document teaching learning, skills and qualities of mind, assessment</p>	
1 1	<p>About assessing validity- subjective input does not invalidate or render equal all contributions- move is from setting down contradictory arguments and saying that's it to being able to say how tensions and contradictions are resolved within debates</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> years vision of history inherited from school: semi-theoretical containing concepts such as bias and evidence that are 'simple and reductive' = all historians are biased and that one argument is as good as another-takes 2 or 3 years to see it's. They come as 'naïve empiricism but constructed in what looks like a post modernist way, Year 1= concentrate and answer questions</p> <p>Yr 3: see historical periods, thematic models of history, approaches; make meta – commentary why different approaches and say something interesting about it</p> <p>Maturity, better at doing it, wider range of personal references and make comparisons between periods and approaches</p>	<p>Courses shd get incrementally difficult or be different. Year 1 teach a variety of outline papers and revisit in year 3 before finals by then can apply insights and skills learned over 3 years</p> <p>Encouragement of reflectiveness and self-awareness</p> <p>Width of study, changing levels of depth =aware of methods of historical interpretation.</p> <p>Historical documents and approaches for 3 years = confidence and sense of command</p> <p>An essay on liberalism (3<sup>rd</sup> year) rather than an essay on Gladstone</p> <p>Draw on different work in different periods and pull it together</p> <p>Historiography not separated out-</p> <p>Formative assessment-extended</p>	<p>abstract historiography courses in first year when don't have enough knowledge of materials about which debates are raging=disconnected from foundation in historical scholarship</p> <p>If doing modules can't get the depth of reading in any one subject that need to get a sense of how an argument is constructed in history</p> <p>Outline courses not more easy-synthesis is very difficult maybe more so than depth-</p> <p>Barriers: financial- space and time is what is needed; under-prepared by school-basic literacy how punctuation works when reading an argument-culture of information gathering plays down questions of intellectual authenticity central to what historians do-</p>

	<p>Sense of command so that can select what is relevant-chosen material because it is relevant to the question</p> <p>Big difference between 2 and 3 responsible, self-consciousness- - a sense of the different levels of authority of authors who have particular positions-can identify internal contradictions</p>	<p>comments on essays, discussions about work- teach to meet the criteria of a good argument</p> <p>Discussion: 3 students thrashing out an issue with tutor as moderator 'you can pin them to the wall in a way you can't on paper'- lectures problematic students tend to look for factual information even when organised around debates-peer group visibly improve by being forced to defend own arguments 'continually subject to intellectual harassment by my peers'</p> <p>Distinguishing the function of different forms of historical literature by reading thoroughly –need variety not distillation to see how get from raw material to position and article is an intervention</p> <p>Weekly essay for one subject and then move on to the next for 1<sup>st</sup> year (can experiment with different ways of structuring knowledge)- they have to learn to talk in 1<sup>st</sup> year (groups 2-4)- need to get an idea of what a week's reading is and how much you need to know. Next year more seminar-led (up to 20)</p> <p>Only have exams in the final year can bring some forward</p>	<p>increasing problem of writing terms of skills</p>
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1 2	Development & refinement of intellectual skills: writing, independence, team work	1 <sup>st</sup> years-awkward in tutorials -by end can talk confidently about more demanding subjects increasing challenges of the course= develop intellectual, interpersonal, written, personal initiative, capacity to manage time	<p>First 2 years large lectures (414) also seminars of 10, no lecture in 3 and 4- does not set essays for them 4<sup>th</sup> year makes a difference- genuine depth-research specialism (MA level)-time is needed encouragement to make use of tutorials and talk to others about them after-must talk in small groups</p> <p>1st year v. testing general courses (European history 1500 to the present) 2<sup>nd</sup> year different type e.g. American, impact of European imperialism in the modern era, medieval-understanding the essence of religion in human affairs is difficult/complicated-marks progression 3<sup>rd</sup> year seminars only-choose topics, questions, just for approval-managing own time and new types of history-courses in methodology, course on Shakespeare about political mentality-v. difficult 4<sup>th</sup> year special subject-depth enjoy expertise of tutor</p> <p>emphasis on the individual student teacher/student personal relationship is crucial-strong emphasis on effort but students shd not feel alone (pastoral back-up)</p>	<p>Students don't want courses cluttered with work-experience and that sort of thing- it is an obstacle to progression barriers:</p> <p>Also anything that destroys a student's confidence, being patronising</p>

		<p>questions demand integration of knowledge</p> <p>helping each other by the end-interdependent library funding</p> <p>finding points of contact between fun and what hard work</p> <p>most students who work hard and regularly can expect to produce 1<sup>st</sup> class components</p>	
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