

Dear Colleagues,

In view of the publication online of the King's College London Final Report of the Palaeography Working Group, I should like to draw the following information to your attention.

The Institute of English Studies (IES, School of Advanced Study, University of London) co-ordinates through its Centre for Manuscript and Print Studies a great deal of teaching and training activity in the field of Palaeography. We therefore warmly welcome the report's recommendation to re-establish a Chair in Palaeography. However, we now feel that it is appropriate to point out some of the many areas that the King's report has omitted or misrepresented (no doubt unwittingly), despite its assurances of consultation and its attempts to assess the provision of courses in this subject area.

1. Members of the London Palaeography Teachers Group were not included in the consultation exercise which KCL put in place. This is an inter-collegiate group which includes, from IES alone, Pamela Robinson, Reader Emerita, who does such sterling work for CIPL, Jane Roberts (Prof. Emerita), and myself, as Professor of Medieval Manuscript Studies and Chair of the LPTG. For a full list of those involved see <http://ies.sas.ac.uk/cmpps/about/teachers.htm>

2. It is questionable whether there is a need for (and, indeed, whether the market will support) more summer schools in the subject in London, other than those already successfully run by IES and by the Courtauld Institute. The report mentions one course run by us, funded by the AHRC. This is not a summer school, as the report claims, but the AHRC-funded 'Medieval Manuscript Studies in the Digital Age', a week-long course for PhD students offered by IES in collaboration with the Warburg Institute and Cambridge University (Corpus Christi College). See <http://ies.sas.ac.uk/study/mmsda>

3. The IES is currently offering much more than this, including the London Palaeography Summer School, which we have expanded from the four or so courses offered originally to the current seventeen courses. This year the School successfully obtained ESF bursary funding towards the school, in recognition of its merits. See <http://ies.sas.ac.uk/cmpps/events/courses/SummerSchool/Index.htm>

4. We also offer three relevant one-week courses as part of the highly successful London Rare Books School, which can be taken for credit towards an MA or MRes - these are 'The Book in the Ancient World', 'The Anglo-Saxon and Carolingian Book', and 'The Medieval Book'. See <http://ies.sas.ac.uk/cmpps/events/courses/LRBS/Index.htm>.

5. There is a Medieval Book component of the MA in the History of the Book that we have been running for fifteen years at IES (see <http://ies.sas.ac.uk/study/MAHOB/Index.htm>). This degree also now includes the option of a dedicated MRes in Medieval MS Studies, directed by myself. I also supervise MPhil / PhD students in this field at IES (not only in Old and Middle English, as the King's statement suggests, but also across the field of Latin MS Studies, see <http://ies.sas.ac.uk/about/Staff/michellebrown.htm>).

London has unique resources for Medieval Manuscript Studies, with its remarkable array of MS repositories, research resources (including the unique resource of the Palaeography Room at Senate House Library, for which we at IES now have a measure of specific responsibility) and professional expertise.

Those of us in the wider University who offer these courses through the IES look forward to working with the new Chair at KCL to develop Palaeographical provision as part of the School of Advanced Study's national research facilitation mission.

Warmest regards,

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