



The History UK

Pandemic Pedagogy Initiative:

An introduction for Classicists

by Aimee Merrydew

Introducing the Pandemic Pedagogy initiative

This short report introduces the Pandemic Pedagogy initiative. The initiative was established in May 2020 by [History UK](#) to provide emergency assistance to historians, including ancient historians and classicists, as they transition to online teaching in response to COVID-19 restrictions. The ‘emergency phase’ was understandably a daunting and disruptive time. As such, the Pandemic Pedagogy team sought to illustrate some of the difficulties of teaching and learning History online. However, the Pandemic Pedagogy team was also keen to emphasise the *opportunities* that arose from these disruptions, particularly the development of our teaching in ways that will bring about positive benefits to student learning.

The Pandemic Pedagogy initiative was coordinated by Professor Kate Cooper (Royal Holloway, University of London) and made up of the following members: Dr Kristen Brill (Keele University), Dr Louise Creechan (University of Glasgow), Dr Lucinda Matthews-Jones (Liverpool John Moores University), Aimee Merrydew (Keele University), Dr Yolana Pringle (University of Roehampton), Dr Manuela Williams (University of Strathclyde), and Dr Jamie Wood (University of Lincoln).

Format and content

The Pandemic Pedagogy team began by surveying History UK members’ views on online teaching to gather advice on ‘best practice’ for online teaching, as well as information about the challenges faced by colleagues and students during this time of transition. This survey helped the team to produce a series of open access resources that support the history community by responding to their pedagogical needs. These resources took the form of blog posts (on [learning design](#), [lectures](#), [contact hours](#), [assessment](#), [accessibility](#), and [community building in the classroom](#) and [in wider cohorts](#)) and a short guide (*The Pandemic Pedagogy Handbook*).

[The Pandemic Pedagogy Handbook](#) is framed around the following questions and sections:

1. What happens to our students' experience of learning, in and out of the 'classroom'?
2. What happens to accessibility?
3. What happens to community?
4. What happens to seminars?
5. What happens to primary source work?
6. What happens to lectures?
7. What happens to assessment and feedback?

The *Handbook* will be of importance to classicists and historians more generally. Each section of the *Handbook* outlines strategies for overcoming particular challenges (e.g. engaging students in primary source work), with an emphasis on accessibility and inclusivity.

Impact and future plans

The Pandemic Pedagogy initiative has had a wide and far-reaching impact, with the *Handbook* receiving over 4500 views at the time of writing. The Pandemic Pedagogy team continues to promote collaborative conversations around pedagogy in the time of COVID-19 by welcoming feedback on the *Handbook* and inviting individuals to contribute to our next series of Pandemic Pedagogy blog posts.

The team is especially keen to hear from anyone interested in sharing their experiences and tips for teaching History (and related disciplines) online. You can get involved with the initiative by following History UK on Twitter ([@history_uk](#)) or by emailing the co-convenors, Dr Yolana Pringle and Dr Jamie Wood (<https://www.history-uk.ac.uk/about/234-2/>).

For more information about the Pandemic Pedagogy initiative and resources, please visit the History UK website: <https://www.history-uk.ac.uk/the-pandemic-pedagogy-handbook/>

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