



ORAL HISTORY MADE EASY

WORKBOOK 2025

Be transformed from novice to proficient oral historian - and we're with you every step of the way.

WE TAKE THE MYSTERY OUT OF ORAL HISTORY



ORAL HISTORY MADE EASY

Week 1: Deciding what sort of oral historian you want to be

1. Welcome To Oral History Made Easy 2025

1.1 Welcome to Oral History Made Easy. A very warm welcome to Oral History Made Easy, your six steps to success training and mentorship programme to become transformed from novice to proficient oral historian. The course places you at the very centre of your oral history journey so you can identify your strategic development goals then work systematically to achieve these by engaging with course content, individual mentorship and peer support. We very much look forward to working with you as you take this important step in knowledge, skills and attributes needed to be an effective oral history practitioner. We will be with you every step of the way on your professional journey.

1.2 Your training needs analysis. To help ensure your unique needs are met for the duration of the course, please complete your individual training needs analysis. This is a short questionnaire which invites you to tell us about your specific learning needs and how we can ensure these are reflected in course content and delivery. We hope you enjoy completing your training needs analysis. Having the chance to reflect on your own strategic development goals will help support your engagement in the course in the weeks ahead. It shouldn't take longer than 5 – 7 minutes to complete your training needs analysis. If you haven't already completed your training needs analysis, [please access it here](#) and submit it to us as soon as possible. Your responses will be seen by Dr Angela Maye-Banbury only and will be treated with the strictest confidence.

2. Your Student Portal

2.1 Accessing the student portal Access to the main student portal is password protected and is accessed with a two stage process. Go to the [Oral History Made Easy web site](#) and click on the 'Student Portal Log In 2025' in the top right hand corner. See image below for guidance. The password is: Mystudentlogin1.

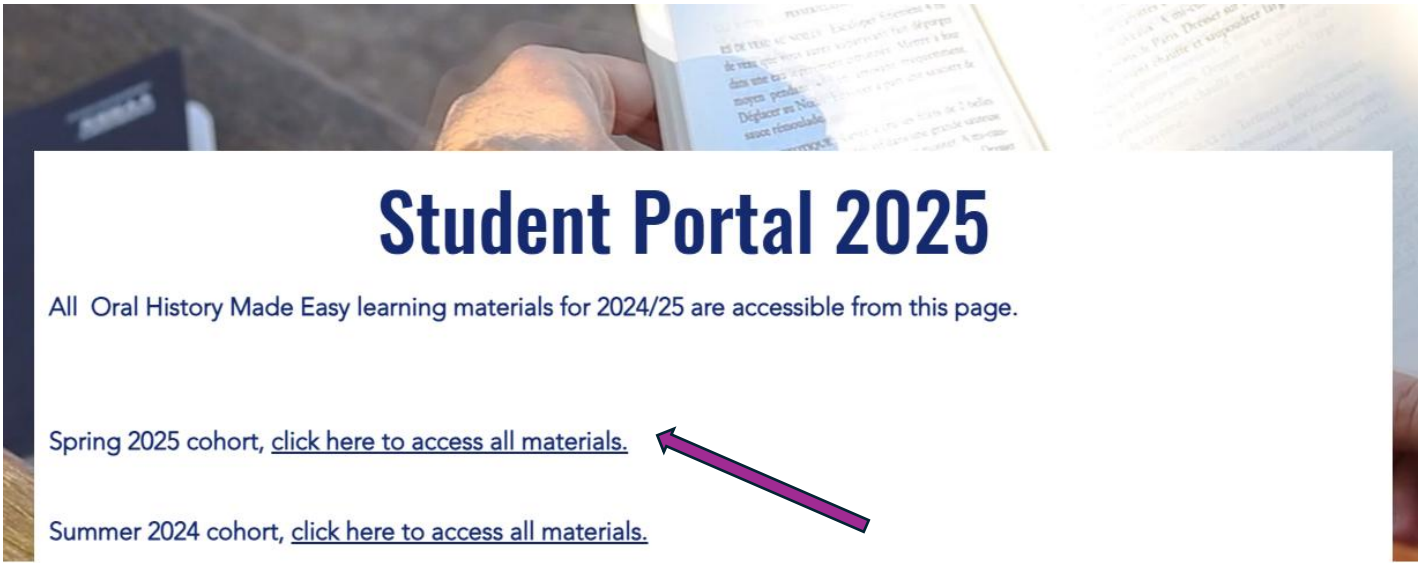


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Welcome to
ORAL HISTORY MADE EASY™

The No 1 learning platform for oral historians

2.2 Once logged in, click on 'Spring 2025 cohort, click here to access all materials' and use the password Oralhistorian3 to log in. This will give you access to all the learning resources you need for Oral History Made Easy 2025. See image below:



2.3 **Weekly content updates** As stated overleaf, new content on the dedicated virtual learning environment is updated weekly and will be available 2 -3 days in advance of each live session on Zoom. If you need to access the materials in another format, please contact Dr Angela Maye-Banbury.

3. Key themes we cover in Week 1:

3.1 In our introductory session in week 1 , our theme is: 'Discover what sort of an oral historian you want to be' ,we will cover the following key themes:

- Explore the power of stories, why we need to preserve oral histories now and listening to the voice. ✓
- How we conceptualise oral history alongside other ways of recounting life experiences. ✓
- Your positionality as an oral historian: importance of beliefs and values on your practice as 'habitus.' ✓
- Sharing our hopes and fears thinking about the weeks ahead ✓
- The power of experiential learning and reflective practice ✓
- Tour of your virtual learning environment ✓
- Preparation for week 2 ✓

4. Your tasks for week 2

4.1 Your hopes and fears . Write around 100 words between now and next week which outline your hopes and fears thinking of your journey in becoming an oral historian NB. This will be really useful when you write the final 1,000 word report in which you will chart your progress on the course and outline a future action plan for your ongoing development (15 mins).

YOUR HOPES AND FEARS

HOPES

FEARS

4.2 Read article Read Linda Shopes' article 'Making sense of oral history.' What is the value of oral history, according to the author? Come to the session armed with your thoughts about what, according to Shopes, makes oral history important! (30 mins).

Have a great week and I look forward to seeing you in week 2!

Best wishes

Angela

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Week 2 Researching definitions of oral history and memory as a process


1. Welcome to week 2


1.1 Welcome to week 2 of Oral History Made Easy. It was great to be with everyone in week 1 of Oral History Made Easy, your six steps to success training and mentorship programme to become transformed from novice to proficient oral historian. Now that you have successfully completed week 1, we are ready to begin week 2 of the training programme. Your journey to becoming an oral history is already gathering pace! We really hope you are enjoying the course. Please do get in touch if there is any aspect of the content we have covered so far you would like to discuss.


3. Key themes we cover in Week 2:


3.1 In week 2 ,we cover the following key themes:

Your reflections on hopes and fears; experiences, beliefs and values and Linda Shopes' paper and your learning communities' 

The emergence of oral history and exploring definitions of oral history. 

The emergence of modern day oral history practice: a note on narratives and defining oral history. 

Memory as a process: the 'unreliable' witness; evoking our memories; the subjectivity of oral history; individual/collective memory 

Your oral history challenges (i) Identify one resource which you think will be of valuable to everyone; (ii) Practice active listening for 30 minutes (iii) Explore the professional organisations which support oral historians in their everyday practice. 

4. Your tasks for week 3

4.1 Find one oral history resource you like and think could be useful to the group. This can be in any format! Please email your resource to Angela for sharing with the group on or before **30th March 2025**

The oral history resource I have chosen to share with the group is...

4.2. The 30 minute listening challenge

Following my participation in the listening challenge, I thought...

4.3 Explore professional communities of practice: [Oral History Society](#); [Oral History Network Of Ireland](#); [Oral History Association](#).

Having looks at the web sites of key organisations involved in promoting oral history practice, the three things I have learnt are:

Have a great week and I look forward to seeing you in week 3!

Best wishes

Angela

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Week 3 Applying ethics in oral history

1. Welcome to week 3


1.1 Welcome to week 3 of Oral History Made Easy. Well done for reaching this stage of the course! You are very nearly at the half way point – many congratulations! You are making fantastic progress!


Now that you have weeks 1 and 2 safely under your belt, we can move confidently towards week 3. This is a particularly important week as we are covering essential ethics for the oral historian. When you are clear about the ethical issues you need to observe when practicing oral history, you will feel so much more confident and capable as you begin to plan to do your first oral history recording.

3. Key themes we cover in week 3:

3.1 In week 3 in our ethics session, we cover the following key themes:

The evolution of ethics –the principles of beneficence, malfeasance and knowledge creation. 

Ethics in action for the oral historian: principles of informed consent; assignment of copyright; the participant information sheet; gatekeeper protocol; interviewee summary sheet; consent to use images or other materials; risk assessment; interview dynamics; incentives or bribes? 

Vulnerable participants and research sensitivities. 

Your health and wellbeing as an oral historian. 

4. Your tasks for week 4

4.1 Read the three ethics scenarios below and decide what course of action you would take. Come to class with your reflections on **all three** scenarios.

Your oral history interviewee begins to talk about painful memories from a childhood experience. Your interviewee is showing visible signs of being upset. What should you do?

You have been given the opportunity to post an interview recorded last year on your project web site. The interview was not recorded by you. You have heard that this interview has rich content which would shed new light on the issue you are researching. What should you do?

Your interviewee has said that they can disclose many new insights on the theme you are researching but you would need to keep the information strictly confidential. What should you do?

4.2 Produce a brief project plan, not exceeding one side of A4, to include the following:

Your project title	
Topic/purpose	
Methodology (optional)	
Scope, time and place.	
Possible narrators.	
Planned outcomes.	
Timeframe for completion.	

4.3 Familiarise yourself with the documentation needed to ensure your interview is compliant with legal requirements and ethical threshold for oral historians. Contact Angela for exemplars to suit your context.

4.4. Finally, make a final decision on who your first oral history interviewee will be. Why you have chosen this person? What opportunities do you think might arise? What challenges do you anticipate? Do you have a contingency interviewee if need be?

Have a great week and I very much look forward to seeing you in week 4!

Best wishes

Angela

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Week 4 Getting ready for your first oral history interview

1. Key themes we cover in week 4:

1.1 In week 4 we cover the following key themes

Recap on ethics documentation and one thing you've learnt so far on the course



Feedback from last week's ethical dilemmas and project proposal.



Golden rules for conducting your first oral history interview; preparing; on arrival;

question types and the art of listening.



After the interview and guidance on transcription.



The assignment



2. Your tasks for week 5. Make notes on the following to prepare you for your oral history interview.

1. Who have you chosen for your first oral history narrator?

2. What have you chosen this person?

3. Has your participant seen your information sheet, copyright agreement?

4. Have they had the chance to ask questions?

5. What challenges do you anticipate?

6. What equipment do you plan to use? Do you have a back up recorded in place?

7. Have you tested your recording equipment several times?

8. Have you tested getting your recording off the equipment?

Have a great week and I look forward to seeing you in week 5!


Best wishes

Angela

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Week 5 Organising and curating your collection


1. Key themes we cover in week 5:

Review and reflection after your first oral history interview: three things that went well, three things you do differently next time. 


Transcription including verification, timecoding and cataloguing. 

Reviewing for sensitivities: third party references, defamation and risk 

Using sound editing software: Audacity. 

Managing your archive and/or placing your recordings in a public archive. 

The assignment 

Celebrating your success: next week and beyond. 

2. What three things went well in our pilot oral history interview? What would you do differently next time?

What went well	What I'd do differently next time

3. Listen to your recording carefully and read your transcript. Consider the following:

(i) What themes are emerging from your narrator's account?

(ii) what original insights are in the interview?

(iii) What references are there to third parties and how might you protect your interviewee, yourself and your organisation from any issues which may arise from reference to third parties?

4. Begin to catalogue your recordings. Keep your cataloguing system simple and easy to update. Summarise your cataloguing system below.

My oral histories will be catalogued as follows:

5. How will you ensure you are able to use sound editing software? Outline your mini development plan below.

The sound editing software I am using is (_____)

Have a great week and I look forward to seeing you in week 6!

Best wishes

Angela

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Week 6 Negotiating the next stages of your oral history journey

1. Key themes we cover in week 6

Let the celebrations and recognition begin!



Course evaluation and assignment submission.



Brief recap of the themes we covered: what is most memorable for you.



Next steps: lifelong and experiential learning; sharing your oral history plans with one other.



2. Many congratulations!

2.1 You have successfully completed the 'Six Steps To Success' programme! Really well done. I hope you have enjoyed the course and that it has inspired you to develop your own oral history collection.

3. Revisiting your project proposal (from week 2). Amend if necessary. In the box blow, list three things you intend to do in the next four weeks and 12 months to advance your oral history work.

Next 4 weeks	Next 12 months
Action point (1)	
Action point 2	
Action point 3	

4. How do you intend to continue professional and personal development in oral history proficiency? Devise a development plan.

I wish you every success with your oral history work. Do stay in touch and let me know how you are getting on! Best wishes Angela

Contact us



For further information on our oral history training and mentorship programmes, contact:

Dr Angela Maye-Banbury

Tel: 00 353 087 4636275

Tel: 00 44 7947 507480

oralhistorymadeeasy@gmail.com

iinfo@achilloralhistories.com

www.oralhistorymadeeasy.com

www.achilloralhistories.com

