

MA in Classics

Awarding Institution:	The University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	The University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s):	Classics and Ancient History, Archaeology
Faculty of Arts and Humanities	Programme length: 12 Months
For students entering in 2004	Date of specification: August 2003
Programme Director: Dr Alastair Blanchard	
Programme Adviser: Dr Alastair Blanchard	
Board of Studies: Classics	
Accreditation: Not appropriate	

Summary of programme aims

The programme aims both to provide a transition between first degree level work and doctoral research in various fields of Classics, and also an opportunity to study and expand students' knowledge of Greek and Roman cultures and to research new or specialist topics in their own right. It offers an introduction to techniques, methods, and tools of advanced study and research, both in the general investigation of the ancient world and in certain specialist fields. We stress the diversity of current approaches to understanding the classical past and to interpreting texts. We make no attempt to inculcate a particular research methodology but rather try to extend the skills and experience of individual postgraduate students in such a way as to enable them to develop their own approach to their chosen field. Thus, the provision is multidisciplinary, combining literary, historical, artistic and archaeological approaches. A wide choice of pathways is possible to allow students to follow their individual preferences in terms both of disciplinary approach and of period. Independent study is promoted and teaching is geared towards the individual development of students both in the teaching of specialist modules and through the supervised dissertation. Students are also expected to take a course in Greek or Latin language, at an appropriate level from beginners to advanced. However, a modern language or two further specialist modules may replace the ancient language module with special permission.

Transferable skills

In addition to providing a grounding for further research, the programme aims to enhance students' personal and interpersonal skills, in particular, to promote the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility; to develop the ability to make decisions and to communicate effectively as both communicator and recipient; and to encourage the faculty of independent learning with a view to adaptability in employment, continuing professional development and life-enhancement.

Programme content

All students take a Research Methods module which covers key skills in an intensive week of workshops. All students also take a course titled 'Approaches to Classics' which introduces students of varied backgrounds to the disciplines, techniques and theoretical approaches relevant to the various branches of Classics and Ancient History and necessary for advanced work or research in the field. Students will also take a language module, studying Greek or Latin in the Department at an appropriate level. By special permission, the latter may be replaced by a modern language offered through the IWLP or by two further specialist modules. In the second term of the academic year, three optional specialist modules are chosen from a large list. A 20,000-word dissertation is also required.

Compulsory modules

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
CLMRM	Research Methods	10	M
CLMAC	Approaches to Classics	30	M

Language modules

One 20-credit module to be chosen

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
CL1BL	Beginners Latin	20	C
CL1BG	Beginners Greek	20	C
CL1IL	Intermediate Latin	20	C
CL1IG	Intermediate Greek	20	C
CL1AL	Advanced Latin	20	C
CL1AG	Advanced Greek	20	C
GCMSBL	Mediaeval Latin: Beginners	20	C
GCMSAL	Mediaeval Latin: Advanced	20	M
LA1PI1	Italian language: Beginners	20	M
LA1PG1	German language: Beginners	20	C
LA1PF1	French language: Beginners	20	C
LA1PK1	Modern Greek language: level 1	20	C
LA1PK2	Modern Greek language: level 2	20	C

Optional modules

Three 10-credit modules to be chosen

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
CLMCB	Dissecting the Classical Body	10	M
CLMMC	Martyrdom from Socrates to Christianity	10	M
CLMLE	Latin Epic in Late Antiquity and Beyond	10	M
CLMFT	Christian Letter Writing and the Friendship Tradition	10	M
CLMTA	The Future of Greek Tragedy: tradition and adaptation	10	M
CLMPP	Changing Tragedy: the politics of performance	10	M
CLMMA	The Evolution of the Museum of Antiquities	10	M
CLMTT	The Transmission of Classical Texts	10	M
CLMJG	Jews and Greeks	10	M
CLMGP	The Greek Past in the Roman Empire	10	M
CLMHA	Art in Hellenistic Society	10	M
CLMLH	Latin Historians	10	M
CLMGC	Greek Choral Poetry	10	M
CLMCI	Greek Coins and Athenian Inscriptions	10	M

Dissertation

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
CLMDIS	Dissertation	90	M

Part-time/Modular arrangements

This programme may be taken over two to five years of part-time study on a modular basis.

Progression Requirements

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

Mark	Interpretation
70 – 100%	Distinction

60 – 69%	Merit
50 – 59%	Good standard (Pass)
<u>Failing categories:</u>	
40 – 49%	Work below threshold standard
0 – 39%	Unsatisfactory Work

For Masters Degrees

To pass the degree of Master students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must be less than 60 credits.*

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall including a mark of 70 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more overall including a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 will be awarded a Merit.

For Postgraduate Diplomas

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must be less than 60 credits.*

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more and have no mark below 40 will be awarded a Merit.

For Postgraduate Certificate

To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.*

*The provision to permit a candidate to be passed overall with a profile containing marks below 40 is made subject to the condition that there is evidence that the candidate applied himself or herself to the work of those modules with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

Summary of teaching and assessment

All the modules are delivered through small group teaching. Non-linguistic modules are assessed through written assignments. The Research Methods module is assessed through a short written assignment. The Approaches to Classics module is assessed through one 2500-word essay. For optional modules, students must produce a short formal presentation in any one module. For written assessments, students must produce EITHER three 2500-word essays OR one essay of 5000 words and one of 2,500. Language modules are assessed by a combination of written assignments and examination. For the dissertation, students work with a supervisor on an individual basis.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme must have a good BA degree (normally of at least II.1 standard) or an equivalent qualification.

Overseas students are also required to fulfil the University standards of English language proficiency.

Admissions Tutor: The course director

Support for students and their learning

The Department has a strong research record and a thriving community of postgraduate students. Discussion and interchange of ideas among staff and postgraduate students is fostered through the Departmental research seminars, which include regular contributions from international guest speakers. The Department has its own specialised library and a 'Resource Room' with a variety of electronic resources for the use of postgraduates.

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. The University Library has good holdings on reception and the classical tradition, and students will also be able to make use of specialist facilities offered by major research libraries and museums and galleries in London, only half-an-hour away by train, and those in Oxford. There are language laboratory facilities for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Programme Directors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

Career prospects

This course equips students for further research, typically of a doctoral level. At the same time, when taken as an opportunity for further study, this degree will enhance the prospects of graduates in those diverse fields which Classicists are well-equipped to enter: administration, management, the civil service, law, accounting, publishing, museum work, teaching.

Educational aims of the programme

The programme aims to provide graduate students with a thorough grounding in contemporary approaches to the study of the reception and legacy of Classical Civilisation understood in their widest sense. In particular, it aims to develop a systematic approach to the acquisition of knowledge together with a critical awareness of current issues of debate and the ability to evaluate and develop appropriate conceptual frameworks. In addition it aims to prepare them for study at MPhil and PhD level by equipping them with the tools necessary for further independent research.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

- ▶ a broad spectrum of interpretations of classical culture approached through selected aspects and topics
- ▶ specific areas and topics of the student's choice, researched in depth
- ▶ key issues of contemporary debate and scholarly enquiry
- ▶ a range of current critical approaches and methodologies
- ▶ a range of research techniques drawn from different areas at a theoretical and a practical level of application
- ▶ specific linguistic and/or palaeographic skills

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Knowledge and understanding are gained through instruction and discussion in a classroom setting; visits to museums, galleries or theatres; through informal activities such as attendance at Department lecture and seminar series or at conferences and colloquia in Reading and outside; through guided independent reading, enquiry and research; and through the assessed elements of the programme – essays, presentations and the dissertation.

Assessment

Knowledge and understanding are assessed through a range of written assignments; through language tests and examinations; through individual presentations; and through the dissertation.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:

- ▶ engage in analytical and evaluative discussion of a range of texts and sources
- ▶ estimate the relevance of specific arguments and interpretations
- ▶ discriminate between opposing theories and interpretations
- ▶ formulate and present judgements, both orally and in written form, on the basis of evidence and argument
- ▶ follow original lines of thought and investigation and propose new hypotheses as appropriate

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Intellectual skills are developed through formal teaching, participation in informal activities, independent research, presentations, and the writing of essays and a dissertation.

Assessment

Intellectual skills are assessed informally through discussion and formally through a range of written assignments, including short essays and/or critical commentaries, long essays and a dissertation.

C. Practical skills – able to:

- ▶ gather, organise and deploy evidence and information, and make judgements in the absence of complete data
- ▶ deal with complex issues systematically and creatively, showing critical judgement and applying appropriate methodologies
- ▶ communicate conclusions effectively in oral and written form to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- ▶ have effective bibliographical and library research skills
- ▶ handle material evidence and visual data effectively
- ▶ demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Practical skills are developed through participation in formal and informal activities, independent research, presentations, and the writing of essays and a dissertation.

Assessment

Practical skills are assessed through a range of written assignments, including short essays and/or critical commentaries, long essays and a dissertation, and through participation in a range of formal and informal activities.

D. Transferable skills – able to:

- ▶ present material in a written form, with discrimination and lucidity in the use of language, professional referencing and clear layout
- ▶ present material orally in a clear, effective and persuasive manner
- ▶ act autonomously in planning, timing and implementing tasks
- ▶ work constructively and adaptably with others
- ▶ display the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Transferable skills are acquired through participation in seminars, attendance at lectures and seminars with internal and external speakers, and applied in self-study and the writing of assignments

Assessment

Transferable skills are assessed through all the assessment processes built into the programme. Oral communication is assessed in the presentation. Planning skills are an intrinsic part of the delivery of long essays to time throughout the course and of the development and production of one extended piece of work, the Dissertation.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably expect to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in module and programme handbooks.