

BSc Archaeology

UCAS code: F420

Awarding Institution:
Teaching Institution:
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s):
Faculty of Science
For students entering Part 1 in 2004
Programme Director: Dr Petra Dark
Programme Adviser: Dr Martin Bell
Board of Studies: Archaeology
Accreditation: Not appropriate

The University of Reading
The University of Reading
Archaeology
Programme length: 3 years
Date of specification: Jan 2004

[Http://www.rdg.ac.uk/Archaeology](http://www.rdg.ac.uk/Archaeology)

Summary of programme aims

The programme aims to provide a thorough degree-level education in Archaeology, with special emphasis on the application of science. It combines practical experience (in the field and laboratory) with academic study of the archaeology of prehistoric, protohistoric, Roman and medieval Europe and the Mediterranean region. There is an opportunity to specialise in aspects of landscape archaeology and environmental change, areas in which the University of Reading has particular teaching and research strengths. The programme is distinctive in its emphasis on the application of archaeological techniques and theory, particularly through the Silchester Field School, and because of the interdisciplinary approach to understanding past landscapes and environmental change. Students will expand the range, depth and sophistication of their knowledge of archaeology through the structured progression of the programme through Parts 1, 2 and 3.

Transferable skills

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills which all students are expected to have developed by the end of their degree programme. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop their skills relating to career management, communication (both written and oral), information handling, numeracy, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology. Students of Archaeology will also develop skills in the critical analysis of data, and be able to think comparatively and cross-culturally. Through practical and field work they will also have the opportunity to develop proficiency in data collection and analysis and in decision-making, together with a sense of personal and group responsibility.

Programme content

The profile which follows states which modules must be taken (the compulsory part) together with one or more lists of modules from which the student must make a selection (the 'selected' modules). Students must choose such additional modules as they wish, in consultation with their programme adviser, to make 120 credits in each Part. The number of credits for each module is shown after its title. In Part 1 the remaining credits can be made up from any optional modules and/or from modules elsewhere in the University. In Parts 2 and 3, up to 20 credits can be taken from modules available elsewhere in the University.

Part 1 introduces the history and methods of the discipline of archaeology, reviews basic evidence for past lifestyles, environments, and human social development, and explores the place of archaeology in contemporary society. Part 2 provides the opportunity to engage with primary archaeological data through participation in the Field School (which will include training

specifically geared to on-site aspects of archaeological science) and laboratory-based practicals. Approaches to interpretation are explored, and modules can be chosen from the prehistoric and historic periods, primarily covering Europe and the Mediterranean region. Part 3 encourages increasing specialisation through the provision of a range of special subjects from which a choice is made, and the opportunity to research a topic independently through the dissertation. At least 2 of the Special Subjects chosen, and the dissertation, must be science-based.

Part 1 (three terms)

Credits Level

Students must take all three Archaeology modules (totalling 60 credits), and choose a combination of 60 credits from an additional one or two preferably science-based subjects (such as Geology or Animal Biology), chosen from modules available elsewhere in the University.

Compulsory modules

AR1TS1	<i>Archaeological Practice</i>	20	C
AR1P1	<i>Introduction to World Prehistory</i>	20	C
AR1RM1	<i>Introduction to Historical Archaeology</i>	20	C

Part 2 (three terms)

Credits Level

There are seven compulsory modules, plus three modules selected from a range of period studies, totalling 120 credits. Students may offer up to 20 credits chosen from modules available elsewhere in the University. Of the 120 credits, 5 are taken up by Career Management Skills.

Compulsory modules

AR2F3	<i>Silchester Field School (summer vacation)</i>	20	I
AR2F1	<i>Professional Skills in Archaeology (including Career Management Skills – 5 credits)</i>	10	I
AR2S1	<i>Archaeological Science</i>	20	I
GG2P3	<i>Human Activity and Environmental Change</i>	10	I
AR2T1	<i>Archaeological Thought</i>	10	I
<i>One of the following:</i>			
AR2F5	<i>Techniques in Artefact Interpretation</i>	10	I
AR2F6	<i>Techniques in Skeletal Interpretation</i>	10	I

Two period modules chosen from different groups in the following list:

Group 1

AR2P4	The Middle Palaeolithic of Europe and SW Asia	20	I
AR2P2	Later Prehistoric Europe	20	I

Group 2

AR2R1	‘Celts’ and Romans in Northern Europe	20	I
AR2R2	Rome and the Mediterranean	20	I
AR2M1	Post-Roman & Early Medieval Europe	20	I
AR2M2	Later Medieval Europe	20	I

Part 3 (three terms)*Credits Level*

There is a compulsory dissertation module plus a choice of option modules, totalling 120 credits. However, those interested in a broader degree may substitute up to 20 credits chosen from modules available elsewhere in the University.

Compulsory modules

AR3D1	<i>Dissertation</i>	40	H
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At least two of the following selected modules:

AR3S1	Environmental Archaeology and the Cultural Landscapes of Prehistory	20	H
AR3S2	Environment and Landscape in Historic Periods	20	H
AR3S4	Micromorphology and the study of early agricultural and urban settlements and landscapes	20	H

No more than two of the following selected modules (maximum 40 credits). (Not all optional modules will be available in any one year. The availability of all optional modules is subject to availability of staff and will require a minimum number of participants.)

AR3T1	Burial Archaeology	20	H
AR3T2	Gender Archaeology: Sex, Sexuality and Gender in the study of the past	20	H
AR3T3	Museum Studies	20	H
AR3T4	Material Culture Studies in Archaeology	20	H
AR3P12	Prehistoric Hunter-gatherers	20	H
AR3P2	Ice Age Art	20	H
AR3P3	The Origins of Farming in the Near East	20	H
AR3P13	The Emergence of Civilisation in Mesopotamia	20	H
AR3P4	Social Life in the Mediterranean 7000-3000 BC	20	H
AR3P5	Social Life in the Mediterranean 3000-500 BC	20	H
AR3P9	British Prehistory 1: the Age of Stonehenge	20	H
AR3P10	British Prehistory 2: the Age of Hillforts	20	H
AR3P11	The Kingdoms of Late Iron Age Britain	20	H
AR3R1	Early Roman Britain	20	H
AR3R2	Roman Art in the Public Sphere	20	H
AR3R3	Roman Art in the Private Sphere	20	H
AR3M1	The Archaeology of Early Anglo-Saxon England	20	H
AR3M2	Later Anglo-Saxon England	20	H
AR3M3	Twelfth-century England – expansion or contraction?	20	H
AR3M4	Crisis? What crisis? England in the Later Middle Ages	20	H
AR3M5	Archaeology of Later Medieval Religion and Belief	20	H

Progression requirements

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2 students must:

- Obtain at least 40% in at least two of the Part 1 Archaeology modules averaged together.
- Achieve and overall average of 40% in 120 credits taken in the examination.
- Achieve not less than 30% in any module except that marks of less than 30% in a total of 20 credits may be condoned, provided that the candidate has pursued the course for the module(s) with reasonable diligence and has not be absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3 students must:

- a) Obtain at least 40% in the compulsory modules.
- b) Achieve an overall average of 40% in 120 credits taken in the examination.
- c) Achieve not less than 30% in any module except that marks of less than 30% in a total of 20 credits may be condoned, provided that the candidate has pursued the course for the module(s) with reasonable diligence and has not be absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

Summary of teaching and assessment

Teaching is delivered in modules that involve (i) both lectures and seminars or workshops (Parts 1 & 2); (ii) work in the field and laboratory (Parts 2 and 3); and (iii) principally seminars (Part 3). Modules are assessed by a mixture of coursework and formal examination, with the proportion of coursework (including seminar performance) increasing as the degree progresses. The Silchester Field School is assessed entirely by coursework, including both performance in the field and a formal piece of assessed work. The final year dissertation comprises a piece of independent research, directed through a series of one-to-one tutorials, and assessed entirely by coursework (including a research design and an oral presentation).

The conventions for classification are included in the Programme Handbook but you should note that weighting between Part 2 and Part 3 for classification purposes is 33% and 67%.

Admission requirements

No previous experience of Archaeology is required for admission. Almost any combination of A-Levels will be appropriate, but it is recommended, however, that applicants should have at least one science A level (or equivalent). Entrants should have achieved:

UCAS Tariff: Either: 260 points from 3 full A-levels, or: 280 points from 3 A-levels and 1 AS level.

International Baccalaureat: 30 points

Scottish Highers: BBBB

Irish Leaving Certificate: BBBBC

Applications from mature candidates are welcomed. A mature applicant is more likely to receive an offer of a place if he or she has undertaken or is undertaking recent study, for example one or more A levels or an Access course, but each case is assessed on its individual merits. You are advised to contact an Admissions Tutor as soon as possible to discuss your individual circumstances.

Applications from international students are welcomed. If you are not offering A-levels or an International Baccalaureat, we advise you to contact an Admissions Tutor before applying in order to discuss the acceptability of your qualifications. IELTS Band 7 (or equivalent) will be required for those whose education has not been undertaken in English.

Admissions Tutors: Prof. Richard Bradley

Support for students and their learning

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. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is

provided by Personal Tutors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union. Support for students in their studies is provided through the University's Personal Academic Record (PAR) Scheme, in which students meet their personal tutors regularly to review their progress.

The Departmental Handbooks issued to Part 1 and to degree course students provide extensive information on resources and study skills. The Department occupies a purpose-built structure with further shared facilities providing a research laboratory, teaching laboratories, computer laboratories, and space for undergraduates to work in the Department (including a Reading Room). There are also traditional and digital drawing office facilities; geophysical and tacheometric survey equipment; excavation equipment; soil and sediment coring equipment; audio-visual resources; and a minibus. The University Library is well stocked with works relating to many different aspects of archaeology.

Career prospects

The degree in Archaeology at Reading is both a route into archaeology (including archaeological science, field archaeology, museums and heritage management), or a good basis for other careers in the areas of the media, management, administration, the civil service, local government, commerce, law, publishing, librarianship and teaching. The emphasis on field training, coupled with wide academic provision in archaeological theory, science, and period and area topics, offers a broad range of vocational skills, in addition to those of communication and problem-solving.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

The Department of Archaeology participates in an active Socrates exchange through which students can spend the second term of Part 2 at the University of Lund, Sweden.

Educational aims of the programme

The programme aims to provide a thorough degree-level education in Archaeology, with special emphasis on the application of science. It combines practical experience (in the field and laboratory) with academic study of the archaeology of prehistoric, protohistoric, Roman and medieval Europe and the Mediterranean region. There is an opportunity to specialise in aspects of landscape archaeology and environmental change, areas in which the University of Reading has particular teaching and research strengths. The programme is distinctive in its emphasis on the application of archaeological techniques and theory, particularly through the Silchester Field School, and because of the interdisciplinary approach to understanding past landscapes and environmental change. Students will expand the range, depth and sophistication of their knowledge of archaeology through the structured progression of the programme through Parts 1, 2 and 3.

The programme also aims to develop a variety of transferable skills from the combination of humanities and science training, enabling students to think comparatively, to learn independently, to interpret evidence, to draw conclusions from archaeological, scientific and historical data, and to communicate these through written and oral media. Through practical experience they will gain proficiency in data collection and analysis, numeracy and use of information technology, problem-solving and decision-making. Experience of teamwork in the field also develops skills of communication and a sense of personal and group responsibility. Through their coursework students develop skills of oral expression, independent learning, and the critical analysis of data.

Programme Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

Knowledge and Understanding

<p>A. Knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. the origins and growth of archaeology as a discipline;2. the current practice of archaeology within its wider political, social and institutional context;3. the diverse sources of evidence used by archaeologists, their variability and reliability;4. the main methods by which archaeologists acquire, date and analyse their primary evidence, including scientific methods;5. the range of interpretative approaches applied to archaeological evidence in their historical, political and social context6. the development of selected human societies from our earliest ancestors to the medieval period, particularly in Europe and the Mediterranean.7. the application of science in archaeology	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies At Part 1, all areas are taught largely through illustrated lectures.</p> <p>Aspects 3-5 are fundamental to all modules in the programme and are taught at all levels through lectures and seminars. Aspects 2-5 and 7 are further developed in Part 2 through participation in the Field School, and in dedicated modules by lectures, seminars, practical classes and problem-oriented class work. Aspect 6 is developed through selected period modules in Part 2, taught by informal lectures and seminars. There is further opportunity to pursue all aspects in depth through selected seminar-based options in Part 3.</p> <p>In all Parts students are expected to undertake independent reading on the basis of bibliographies issued for each module, and prepare essays and seminar papers. The dissertation provides an opportunity for the further development of independent research.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i> Most knowledge is tested by a combination of coursework and formal examination, except that in most practical-based modules it is examined entirely by coursework; the dissertation is mostly by coursework. In Part 3, oral presentations also contribute.</p>
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B. Intellectual skills – Students will be able:

1. to assess the character and quality of archaeological data;
2. to synthesise and integrate evidence from multiple and diverse sources;
3. to recognise and critically evaluate past and current theoretical approaches and competing interpretations;
4. to think comparatively and cross-culturally;
5. to think critically and independently;
6. to locate, extract and assemble data and information;
7. to organise material in order to synthesise and articulate an argument effectively.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

These skills are developed throughout the programme. Modules at all levels deal with questions of evidence and interpretation in lectures, seminars, and practicals. Set essays, seminar discussions, oral presentations and examination questions frequently involve analysis and debate of intellectual problems, particularly in Part 3 and in a dedicated module on Archaeological Thought in Part 2. Awareness of current approaches is encouraged as Part 3 options are often linked to lecturers' research interests. Individual feedback is provided on content and organisation of essays. Independent thinking is developed especially through the dissertation module for which initial preparation and regular support are provided.

Assessment

These skills are assessed in all Parts of the programme by a combination of coursework, essays, oral presentations, dissertation and examination.

C. Practical skills – students will be able :

1. to identify, excavate, record and analyse archaeological stratigraphy, features and deposits;
2. to excavate, process, identify and analyse a variety of artefacts and environmental material;
3. to recognise and interpret archaeological traces in the landscape;
4. to prepare standard archaeological drawings and other forms of visual presentation;
5. to locate, extract and appraise critically archaeological information in published sources and on the WWW;
6. to identify and use the most appropriate software application for a specific archaeological task
7. to plan and carry out a primary research project, working independently.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Skills 1-4 are primarily taught through participation in the Field School and by problem-oriented class work in dedicated modules in Part 2, following preliminary lectures in Part 1.

Skill 5 is developed throughout the programme. Bibliographies are provided for all modules, students are trained in library use, and many modules provide experience searching for information via the WWW. The IT element is additionally provided self-study sessions at Part 1, and at Part 2 through demonstrations and group practical work, in a dedicated module which also supplies Skill 6.

Assessment

Skills 1-4 and 6 are assessed by coursework. Skill 5 is assessed by a combination of coursework, examinations and dissertation. Skill 7 is assessed through the dissertation.

D. Transferable skills – Students will be able:

1. to communicate clearly and effectively in speech and in a variety of types of writing;
2. to deal effectively with a variety of scientific and numerical data and visual material;
3. to identify and devise strategies for solving problems;
4. to work effectively in a team;
5. to locate information and use information technology;
6. to organise their own time purposefully and work independently;
7. to make informed career plans.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Skill 1 is developed throughout the course in the writing of essays, practical and laboratory reports, and the dissertation, and by participation in seminars.

Skills 2-5 are taught particularly through the Field School and in the practical elements of several Part 2 modules, as well as in selected Part 3 modules.

Skill 6 is essential for the successful completion of the programme, and is exercised particularly through the Field School and the dissertation.

Career management is taught through a distinct Part 2 module linked with other professional skills in Archaeology.

Assessment
These skills are assessed in all Parts of the programme by a combination of coursework, essays, oral presentations, dissertation and examination.

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.