

## **MA in Italian Studies**

### **For students entering in 2005**

Awarding Institution: The University of Reading  
Teaching Institution: Department of Italian Studies  
Faculty of Arts and Humanities Programme length: 12 months  
Date of specification: September 2005  
Programme Director: Professor Duggan  
Board of Studies: Board of Studies for Postgraduate Studies in Italian  
Accreditation: N/A

### **Summary of programme aims**

Students will acquire a critical awareness and understanding of selected aspects of Italian culture, history, and society. They will learn some of the principal methodological and conceptual tools appropriate to postgraduate studies, and will be taught to apply these to a significant body of knowledge in such fields as medieval and modern Italian literature, social and political history, cinema, and contemporary poetry. They will have an opportunity to develop advanced reading skills in Italian or another language of their choice. The MA is intended both as a free-standing programme for graduates (including those from cognate disciplines) and as a preparation for those intending to proceed to research at a doctoral level.

### **Transferable skills**

- The ability to analyse information and data.
- The ability to summarise arguments and process new material.
- The ability to express ideas in a clear and cogent form.
- The ability to think critically and independently.

### **Programme content**

#### **Compulsory Module**

Mod Code		<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
FRM9	<i>Introduction to Advanced Study and Research Methodology</i>	30	M
ITM8	<i>Dissertation</i>	60	M

#### **Optional Modules (students are required to choose three Optional Modules)**

ITM1	<i>Dante: the Commedia</i>	30	M
ITM2	<i>Dante's Minor Works</i>	30	M
ITM3	<i>Women in the Renaissance: choices and strategies</i>	30	M
ITM4	<i>Women writers: from the Renaissance to the French Revolution</i>	30	M
ITMH3	<i>Conflict and control: the South, 1860-1945</i>	30	M
ITM5	<i>Modernising Italian culture: the avant-garde in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century</i>	30	M
ITMH5	<i>Social transformation and political immobility: Italy 1945-92</i>	30	M
ITMIC3	<i>Italian cinema: authorship, interpretation and textual analysis</i>	30	M

ITM6	<i>Italian semiotic theory and the work of Umberto Eco</i>	30	M
ITM7	<i>The voice and the self in contemporary Italian poetry</i>	30	M

### **Part-time/Modular arrangements**

The programme is 12 months full-time. It can also be taken over two years: in the first year students will do FRM9 (which is taken by all MA students in Modern Languages) and two optional modules; in the second year, a further optional module and the dissertation.

### **Progression requirements**

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

<u>Mark</u>	<u>Interpretation</u>
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 60 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 50 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**

Teaching will be by seminar. Students will be required to make individual presentations on pre-agreed topics as the basis for group discussions. Assessment will be by an essay for each module (approx 5,000 each) and a dissertation of 10,000-15,000 words. FRM9 will be assessed by essays and an assignment.

## **Admission requirements**

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained a good first degree. Knowledge of Italian language is not essential, but admission to certain modules may require a good reading knowledge of the language.

**Admissions Tutor:** Prof Christopher Duggan

## **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 Programme Directors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union. The Library's holdings in the field of Italian Studies are outstanding, and include over 20,000 books and dozens of periodicals.

## **Career prospects**

Doctoral research leading to an academic career

Secondary and further education

Librarianship

Archivist

Students who do not wish to pursue a career in which this qualification is a requirement enter many different careers (civil service, commerce, management).

## **Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**

In certain circumstances, and with the agreement of the Programme Director, it may be possible to replace one of the options with an approved module taken at an Italian university.

## **Educational aims of the programme**

- To provide students with a knowledge and critical understanding of aspects of modern Italian culture, society and history
- To provide students with the skills and confidence to undertake research in Italian studies
- To develop the critical and analytical skills of the student
- To develop oral and written communicative skills

## Programme Outcomes

### *Knowledge and Understanding*

<p><b>A. Knowledge and understanding of:</b></p> <p>Selected aspects of Italian culture, society and history from the Middle Ages to the present.</p> <p>The main critical and academic issues relating to the selected topics in Italian culture, society and history.</p> <p>The texts and secondary literature relating to the chosen topic.</p> <p>Practical research methods relating to the chosen areas of study.</p>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b></p> <p>Teaching will be by seminar.</p> <p>Learning will be through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the presentation of seminar papers</li><li>• critical discussion of seminar papers</li><li>• critical reading of secondary literature</li><li>• preparation of assessed work</li></ul> <p>FRM9 gives students practical training in the use of library and other research resources as well as in the skills relevant to historical research and writing.</p> <p>The Dissertation will enable students to develop their research skills and their critical understanding of an area relating to one of their Optional Modules.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>FRM9 will be assessed by essays and an assignment.</p> <p>All other modules will be assessed by an essay of approx 5,000 words.</p> <p>The Dissertation will be of 10,000-15,000 words and should be submitted by 20 September.</p>
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### *Skills and other attributes*

<p><b>B. Intellectual skills – able to:</b></p> <p>Show a good understanding of texts, and selected themes and issues in Italian culture, society and history from the Middle Ages to the present.</p> <p>To use secondary literature critically to support their own arguments and views.</p> <p>To develop a reasoned and well founded approach to the subject matter of their chosen module.</p> <p>To present a coherently argued and well structured defence of their views and interpretations.</p>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b></p> <p>Teaching will be by seminar.</p> <p>Learning will be through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the presentation of seminar papers</li><li>• critical discussion of seminar papers</li><li>• critical reading of the texts and secondary literature</li><li>• preparation of assessed work</li></ul> <p>FRM9 will give students the skills needs to carry out independent enquiry and research.</p> <p>The Dissertation will enable students to develop their research skills and their critical understanding of an area relating to one of their Optional Modules.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>FRM9 will be assessed by essays and an assignment.</p> <p>All other modules will be assessed by an essay of approx 5,000 words.</p> <p>The Dissertation will be of 10,000-15,000 words and should be submitted by 20 September.</p>
<p><b>C. Practical skills – able to:</b></p> <p>Read and evaluate a variety of texts and secondary sources in English and Italian.</p> <p>Use research facilities such as the library, archives and the internet appropriately.</p> <p>Organise and focus their own learning and intellectual development.</p> <p>Plan and write a dissertation.</p>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b></p> <p>FRM9 will enable students to acquire practical skills in empirical research methods and strategies using the library and IT resources.</p> <p>The other modules will enable students to implement their research skills.</p> <p>The Dissertation will enable students to prepare, plan and write a sustained piece of original research.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>FRM9 will be assessed by essays and an assignment.</p> <p>All other modules will be assessed by an essay of approx 5,000 words.</p> <p>The Dissertation will be of 10,000-15,000 words and should be submitted by 20 September.</p>

**D. Transferable skills – able to:**

Argue clearly and logically both in writing and in speaking.

Use evidence effectively to support arguments.

Analyse and evaluate data from a variety of sources.

Analyse and evaluate texts.

Develop postgraduate level study, research and writing skills.

Develop skills in the planning and time management of projects.

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Students read, analyse and discuss a wide variety of texts and issues for seminars and essays.

Undertake directed and independent research.

Seminar presentations and written essays will develop student abilities to present information and analysis in oral and written form.

Students are introduced to a broad range of research resources.

Possibilities for further postgraduate study at PhD level are discussed where appropriate.

*Assessment*

FRM9 will be assessed by essays and an assignment.

All other modules will be assessed by an essay of approx 5,000 words.

The Dissertation will be of 10,000-15,000 words and should be submitted by 20 September.

*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.