

## **MA (Res) in French Studies**

### **For students entering in 2007**

Awarding Institution:	The University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	Department of French Studies
Faculty of Arts and Humanities	Programme length: 12 months
Date of specification: October 2006	
Programme Director: Professor Félix	
Board of Studies: Board of Studies for Postgraduate Programmes in French	
Accreditation: N/A	

### **Summary of programme aims**

The MA is principally intended as a preparation for those intending to proceed to research in French Studies at doctoral level. It enables students to devise a course of study the content of which is negotiated with the department on the basis of their needs and interests and the department's teaching resources. Students will acquire a critical and historical awareness and understanding of selected aspects of French culture, history, politics and society. They will learn some of the principal methodological and conceptual tools appropriate to postgraduate studies, and will learn to apply these to a significant body of knowledge in such fields as medieval and modern French literature, social and political history. They will have an opportunity to develop advanced reading skills in French.

### **Transferable skills**

- Postgraduate level study, research and writing skills
- Ability to analyse visual or textual material rapidly and in depth
- The ability to analyse information and data
- The ability to summarise arguments and process new material rapidly and coherently
- Ability to communicate results of research concisely and clearly
- The ability to think critically and independently.

### **Programme content**

		<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
<i>Compulsory modules</i>			
FRM11	Introduction to Advanced Study and Research Methodology	30	M
FRM12	Dissertation	90	M
Students are required to choose two further modules, Option Modules 1 and 2, each of 30 credits, the design and content of which will be negotiated between the student and the department on the basis of the student's needs and interests and the department's teaching resources. In place of one of these, a relevant 30-credit module may be taken from another M.A. programme in the University. The selection of options and the dissertation should be complementary, and form a coherent and appropriate whole in the view of the Programme Director. Option Module 3, for the Postgraduate Diploma only, is similar to Modules 1 and 2.			
FRM13	Option Module 1	30	M
FRM14	Option Module 2	30	M
FRM15	Option Module 3 (for the Postgraduate Diploma only)	30	M

In place of one of these, a relevant 30-credit module may be taken from another M.A. programme in the University. The selection of options and the dissertation should be complementary, and form a coherent and appropriate whole.

#### Part-time/Modular arrangements

The programme is 12 months full-time. It can also be taken over two years: normally in the first year students will do FRM1 and the two option modules; in the second year, the dissertation.

#### Summary of teaching and assessment

Teaching will be by seminar and tutorial. Students will be required to make individual presentations, where appropriate, as the basis for group discussion, and to make an oral presentation of their research for the dissertation. Assessment will be

- By an assessed essay of 5000 words for each Option Module
- By one or more essays or similar assignments with a combined total of 5000 words for FRM1
- A dissertation of 20,000 words (80%), together with its dissertation portfolio (10%) and oral presentation (10%)

The Dissertation must be submitted by the third Friday in September. The dissertation portfolio must normally be submitted at the end of the Autumn term; the Oral presentation in the Summer term. Assessed work, including the dissertation, may be submitted in either English or French.

#### 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*

An MA may be awarded on completion of 180 credits to be made up of 30 credits for the compulsory module *Introduction to Advanced Study and Research Methodology*, 60 credits for coursework in the Option Modules and 90 credits for the dissertation.

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 eligible for a Merit.

### *For Postgraduate Diplomas*

A Diploma may be awarded on completion of at least 120 credits to be made up of 30 credits for FRM1, *Introduction to Advanced Study and Research Methodology*, and 90 credits coursework from FRM3, FRM4 and FRM5.

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 eligible for a Merit.

### *For Postgraduate Certificate*

A certificate may be awarded on the completion of at least 60 credits in two of FRM1, FRM3 and FRM4.

To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 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.

### **Admission requirements**

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained a good first degree in a relevant subject, normally at least a 2i. Knowledge of French is essential.

Admissions Tutor: Professor Félix

### **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 French 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**

N/A

### **Educational aims of the programme**

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

### **Programme Outcomes**

#### ***Knowledge and Understanding***

##### **A. Knowledge and understanding of:**

Selected aspects of the culture and history of French

The original sources relevant to their chosen Options and Dissertation topic

The secondary literature covering the chosen period or theme

The critical and theoretical vocabulary associated with their areas of study

Practical research methods related to their area of study

##### Teaching/learning methods and strategies

- Learning will be through the presentation of seminar papers
- Critical discussion of seminar papers
- Preparation of assessed work
- The Option Modules will enable students to further their particular specialist interests over a range of periods from the medieval to the modern and over a variety of aspects relating to French history and culture.
- The Dissertation will enable students to develop their research methods and critical understanding of an area relating to the Option Modules

### *Skills and other attributes*

<p><b>B. Intellectual skills</b> – able to:</p> <p>Analyse critically French texts and/or films or a period of history</p> <p>Show a good understanding of different historical and theoretical approaches to French culture</p> <p>Develop an individual approach to the subject matter of their chosen module</p> <p>Use critically secondary literature to support their own views.</p> <p>Present a coherently argued and structured defence of their interpretation of the material in their course</p>	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching will be by tutorial and seminar</li> <li>• Learning will be through the presentation and critical discussion of seminar papers</li> <li>• The compulsory <i>Introduction to Advanced Study and Research Methodology</i> gives students practical training in use of library and other research resources and prepare them to conduct independent enquiry and research</li> <li>• The Option Modules will enable students to conduct intellectual enquiry relating to their chosen literary or historical specialisations</li> <li>• The Dissertation will enable students to pursue in further depth studies relating an Option Module already chosen</li> </ul>
<p><b>C. Practical skills</b> – able to:</p> <p>Read and assimilate texts in a variety of registers, dialects and critical languages of French.</p> <p>Use research facilities such as the library, archives and the internet appropriately and efficiently</p> <p>Organise and focus their own learning and development</p> <p>Plan and write a dissertation</p>	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The compulsory <i>Introduction to Advanced Study and Research Methodology</i> will enable students to acquire practical skills in empirical research methods and strategies using the library and IT resources</li> <li>• The Option modules will enable students to put into practice research and drafting skills</li> <li>• The Dissertation will enable students to prepare, plan and write a sustained and substantial piece of original research</li> </ul>

**D. Transferable skills – able to:**

Present complex arguments and material in oral or written form of

Analyse source and critical material to provide support for personal interpretation

Use IT skills in oral and written presentations

Develop postgraduate level study, research and writing skills

Analyse and think critically about complex texts and issues

Communicate clearly to others their own thinking and the reasons for it

Be aware of methods and resources to develop their knowledge and understanding further, as part of an ability to learn independently

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

- Students will read, analyse and discuss a wide variety of texts and issues for seminars and essays
- Undertake directed and independent research
- Discussions and written essays will develop student abilities to present information and analysis in oral and written form
- The Oral presentation of the Dissertation research will develop students' ability to engage in formal debate
- Students are introduced to a broad range of resources including library and digital research tools
- Possibilities for further postgraduate study at PhD level are discussed where relevant

**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 be expected 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 the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance processes or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.**