MA Res in Italian Studies
For students entering in 2009

Awarding Institution:	The University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	The University of Reading
Faculty of Arts and Humanities	
Programme length:	12 months
Date of specification:	October 2009
Programme Director:	Dr Daniela La Penna
Board of Studies:	Board of Studies for Postgraduate Programmes in Italian
Accreditation:	N/A

Summary of programme aims

The MA is principally intended as a preparation for those intending to proceed to research in Italian 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 Italian culture (including film), 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 Italian literature, social and political history, cinema, and contemporary poetry. They will have an opportunity to develop advanced reading skills in Italian. Students whose interests are mainly historical should follow the M.A. Programme in Modern Italian History rather than this one.

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

	Credits	Level
Compulsory modules		
ITM11 Introduction to Advanced Study and Research Methodology	30	7
ITM12 Dissertation	90	7

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.

	Credits	Level
ITM13 Option Module 1	30	7
ITM14 Option Module 2	30	7
ITM15 Option Module 3 (for the Postgraduate Diploma only)	30	7

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 ITM11 and one or two option modules, if they wish to do so; in the second year, the second optional module (if not taken in first year) and 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 5,000 words for each Option Module
- By one essay or similar assignment with a total of 5,000 words for ITM11
- and finally by a dissertation of 15,000 words (100% of the module mark), together with a dissertation portfolio (formative coursework).
The Dissertation must be submitted by the end of September. The dissertation portfolio must normally be submitted at the beginning of the Summer term, whereas the Intermediary report at the end of the Summer Term. Assessed work, including the dissertation, may be submitted in either English or Italian. All assessed essays should be submitted by the end of the first week of the Summer Term.

Progression requirements

Mark Interpretation
70 – 100% Distinction
60 – 69% Merit
50 – 59% Good standard (Pass)

Failing categories:
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 MA students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation *and have no mark below 40 in modules ITM11 and ITM13*. 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 not exceed 55 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 eligible for a Merit.

For PG Diplomas
A Diploma may be awarded on completion of at least 120 credits to be made up of 30 credits for ITM11, *Introduction to Advanced Study and Research Methodology*, and 90 credits coursework from ITM13, ITM14 and ITM15.

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more *and have no mark below 40 in modules ITM11 and ITM13*. 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 not exceed 55 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 PG Certificates
A certificate may be awarded on the completion of at least 60 credits in two of ITM11, ITM13 and ITM14.

To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more *and have no mark below 40 in modules ITM11 and ITM13*. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.

Admission requirements

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

Admissions Tutor: Dr Daniela La Penna (d.lapenna@reading.ac.uk)

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, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and the Student Services Directorate. The Student Services Directorate is housed in the Carrington Building and includes the Careers Advisory Service, the Disability Advisory Service, Accommodation Advisory Team, Student Financial Support, Counselling and Study Advisors. Student Services has a Helpdesk available for enquiries made in person or online (www.risisweb.reading.ac.uk), or by calling the central enquiry number on (0118) 378 5555. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions on everything from accommodation to finance. The Carrington Building is open between 8:30 and 17:30 Monday to Thursday (17:00 Friday and during vacation periods). Further information can be found in the Student website (www.reading.ac.uk/student).

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

MA students may apply for the Erasmus Exchange with select Italian universities for a maximum of three months. How and whether the Erasmus programme can best benefit the individual intellectual needs of the students and support the research to be undertaken for the MA dissertation, will be discussed with the Programme Director together with the Dissertation supervisor by the end of the Autumn Term.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
• Selected aspects of the culture and history of Italy • 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	• 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 Italian history and culture. • The Dissertation will enable students to develop their research methods and critical understanding of an area relating to the Option Modules *Assessment* These skills will be assessed through: • presentations, • reflective feedback on research seminar papers within the research seminar series of the Department of Modern Languages and the Faculty-wide research events, • written papers (formative assessment) and essays • analytical bibliographies and reviews of key scholarly works on given topics.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
• Analyse critically Italian texts and/or films or a period of history • Show a good understanding of different historical and theoretical approaches to Italian culture • Develop an individual approach to the subject matter of their chosen module • Use critically secondary literature to support their own views. • Present a coherently argued and structured defence of their interpretation of the material in their course	• Teaching will be by tutorial and seminar • Learning will be through the presentation and critical discussion of seminar papers • The compulsory *Introduction to Advanced Study and Research Methodology* gives students practical training in use of library and other research resources and prepare them to conduct independent enquiry and research • The Option Modules will enable students to conduct intellectual enquiry relating to their chosen literary or historical specialisations • The Dissertation will enable students to pursue in further depth studies relating an Option Module already chosen. *Assessment* These skills will be assessed through: • presentations, • reflective feedback on research seminar papers within the research seminar series of the Department of Modern Languages and the Faculty-wide research events, • written papers (formative assessment) and essays • bibliographies and reviews of key scholarly works on given topics.

C. Practical skills – able to:	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
• Read and assimilate texts in a variety of registers, dialects and critical languages of Italian. • Use research facilities such as the library, archives and the internet appropriately and efficiently • Organise and focus their own learning and development • Plan and write a dissertation	• The compulsory *Introduction to Advanced Study and Research Methodology* will enable students to acquire practical skills in empirical research methods and strategies using the library and IT resources • The Option modules will enable students to put into practice research and drafting skills • The Dissertation will enable students to prepare, plan and write a sustained and substantial piece of original research. *Assessment* These skills will be assessed through: • presentations, • reflective feedback on research seminar papers within the research seminar series of the Department of Modern Languages and the Faculty-wide research events, • written papers (formative assessment) and essays • bibliographies and reviews of key scholarly works on given topics.

D. Transferable skills – able to:	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
• 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	• 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 *Assessment* These skills will be assessed through: • presentations, • reflective feedback on research seminar papers within the research seminar series of the Department of Modern Languages and the Faculty-wide research events, • written papers (formative assessment) and essays • bibliographies and reviews of key scholarly works on given topics.

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.