

MA(Res) in Medieval Studies
For students entering Part 1 in 2011/2

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| Awarding Institution: | University of Reading |
| Teaching Institution: | University of Reading |
| Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s): | |
| Faculty: | Arts, Humanities and Social Science Faculty |
| Programme length: | 1 years |
| Date of specification: | 23/Aug/2011 |
| Programme Director: | Dr Anne Lawrence |
| Programme Advisor: | |
| Board of Studies: | Graduate Centre for Medieval Studies |
| Accreditation: | |

Summary of programme aims

The MA (Res) programme aims:

- To provide graduate students with a thorough grounding in contemporary approaches to key aspects of the culture of the Middle Ages;
- To equip them with the tools for further research by developing their critical and conceptual understanding;
- To deal with a multidisciplinary approach (via a compulsory core module, Researching the Middle Ages, which gives students thorough and wide-ranging training in all areas relevant to medieval studies);
- To offer the opportunity to develop linguistic and palaeographic skills;
- To promote independent study and research skills as a basis, where appropriate, for a research degree.

Transferable skills

The University 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 enhance their skills relating to career management, communication (both written and oral), information handling, numeracy, problem solving, team working and use of information technology. In addition to providing a grounding for further research, the programme aims to enhance students' personal and interpersonal skills in relation to future employment: 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 continuing professional development.

Programme content

All students take the core Researching the Middle Ages module introducing skills and approaches necessary for research in the field of medieval studies. A further compulsory module combines Medieval Latin and Medieval Palaeography. The two Options are chosen from a broad range, offering the opportunity for independent research with a scholar in the field; one may be linked to the dissertation topic. One Option may be replaced by a module offered in another MA programme. The Dissertation provides for extensive independent research, and includes an Oral Presentation.

MA (Res) (180 credits)

Compulsory modules

| Code | Title | Credits | Level |
|--------|---------------------------------|---------|-------|
| MSMRM2 | Researching the Middle Ages | 20 | 7 |
| MSMLP | Medieval Latin and Palaeography | 30 | 7 |
| MSMDI7 | Dissertation | 90 | 7 |
| MSMSTA | Option A | 20 | 7 |
| MSMSTB | Option B | 20 | 7 |

Two Options to be selected from the list, one to be taken as Option A and taught in the Autumn term, the other as Option B and taught in the Spring term. One Option may be replaced by a module from another MA programme at the discretion of the Director

Postgraduate Diploma in Medieval Studies (120 credits)

Students take the following modules:

| Code | Title | Credits | Level |
|--------|------------------------------------|---------|-------|
| MSMRM2 | Researching the Middle Ages | 20 | 7 |
| MSMLP | Medieval Latin and Palaeography | 30 | 7 |
| MSMSTA | Option A | 20 | 7 |
| MSMSTB | Option B | 20 | 7 |
| MSMSSA | Advanced Study and Source Analysis | 30 | 7 |

Postgraduate Certificate in Medieval Studies (60 credits)

Students take the following modules:

| Code | Title | Credits | Level |
|--------|-----------------------------|---------|-------|
| MSMRM2 | Researching the Middle Ages | 20 | 7 |
| MSMSTA | Option A | 20 | 7 |
| MSMSTB | Option B | 20 | 7 |

Part-time or modular arrangements

This programme may be taken over two years of part-time study. The normal pattern is for the Researching the Middle Ages and Palaeography and Medieval Latin modules to be taken in the first year and the Options and Dissertation in the second year, but this may be varied if required. It may also be taken over up to five years. The recommended order is Researching the Middle Ages; Palaeography and Medieval Latin; Options; Dissertation, but this may be varied by agreement.

Progression requirements

N/A

Assessment and classification

The compulsory modules are delivered through small group teaching. The Latin and Palaeography module is assessed through a mixture of written assignments and timed tests. The Researching the Middle Ages module is assessed through coursework. The Options and the Dissertation are supervised on an individual basis. Each Option is assessed by an essay of 4,000 words, OR, where learning a language is involved, by coursework and a timed test. The Dissertation is assessed by an Oral Presentation and a written Dissertation, normally of 18,000-20,000 words, including footnotes but excluding bibliography and appropriate appendices. Classification will follow the University's taught postgraduate marks classification.

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

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 of all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more 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 the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more, and the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits. In addition, the total value of all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits

For Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more, and the credit value of modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.

Admission requirements

The qualifications of students will be assessed on an individual basis. Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained upper second class in an undergraduate degree or an equivalent qualification. Overseas students are also required to fulfil the university standards of English language proficiency.

Admissions Tutor: The Director, Graduate Centre for Medieval Studies, School of History
(GCMS@reading.ac.uk)

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support is provided by a wide array of services across the University, including: the University Library, the Student Employment, Experience and Careers Centre (SEEC), In-sessional English Support Programme, the Study Advice and Mathematics Support Centre teams, IT Services and 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 advisers in the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and offers advice on accommodation, careers, disability, finance, and wellbeing. 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 and runs workshops and seminars on a range of topics. For more information see www.reading.ac.uk/student

In addition, the GCMS has its own dedicated room offering a private study area supported by its own specialised library.

Career prospects

The programme leads predominantly to further research, typically at a doctoral level. It is also a useful training for students wishing to pursue a career in archival work, and in the Heritage industry. In addition, recent postgraduates have gone on to pursue careers in teaching.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

The University of Reading has links with universities both in Europe and worldwide. Students interested in studying abroad, either for an Option or for their Dissertation, should discuss this with the Programme Director.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. medieval history, literature and culture approached through selected aspects and topics
2. specific areas and topics of the student's choice and researched in greater depth
3. key issues of contemporary debate and scholarly enquiry
4. a range of current critical approaches and methodologies
5. a range of research techniques drawn from different areas at a theoretical and a practical level of application
6. specific linguistic and/or palaeographic skills

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Knowledge and understanding are gained through formal teaching (seminars, tutorials), organised visits (to archive collections), informal activities (attendance at Centre lecture and seminar series), independent research, presentations, and the writing of essays and a dissertation.

Assessment

Knowledge and understanding is assessed through a range of oral and written assignments, including timed tests, essays and a dissertation.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - *able to*:

1. engage in analytical and evaluative discussion of a range of texts and sources
2. estimate the relevance of specific arguments

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Intellectual skills are developed through formal teaching, participation in informal activities, independent research, presentations, and the writing

- and interpretations
3. discriminate between opposing theories and interpretations
 4. formulate and present judgements, both orally and in written form, on the basis of evidence and argument
 5. follow original lines of thought and investigation and propose new hypotheses as appropriate

C. Practical skills - *able to:*

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

D. Transferable skills - *able to:*

1. present material in a written form, with discrimination and lucidity in the use of language, professional referencing and clear layout
2. present material orally in a clear and effective manner
3. act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks
4. work creatively, flexibly and adaptably with others
5. display the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development

of essays and a dissertation.

Assessment

Intellectual skills are assessed informally through discussion and formally through a range of oral and written assignments, including timed tests, essays and a dissertation.

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 timed tests, essays and a dissertation, and through participation in a range of formal and informal activities.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Transferable skills are acquired through participation in seminars, tutorials, 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 formally through a range of written assignments, including timed tests, essays and a dissertation, and informally through participation in Centre activities.

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 process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.