MA in Archaeology
For students entering in 2012/3

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	
Faculty:	Science Faculty
Programme length:	1 years
Date of specification:	12/Sep/2012
Programme Director:	Prof Grenville Astill
Programme Advisor:	
Board of Studies:	MA in Archaeology
Accreditation:	

Summary of programme aims
The programme aims to foster a systematic, advanced understanding of the human past through the study and interpretation of archaeological evidence, and an ability to engage in independent research. It is designed to allow students to develop their specific interests in the archaeology of prehistoric, protohistoric, Roman and medieval Europe and the Mediterranean region and the Near East while gaining an ability to recognise current weaknesses in our understanding of the past, either due to lack of evidence, poor methodology or inappropriate theory, and to propose means by which such weaknesses can be rectified. It also aims to prepare students for doctoral study.

Transferable skills
In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop their skills relating to oral and written communication, data collection and analysis, and information technology to a high level, providing the independent learning ability that is essential for future professional development. Students will als develop skills in the critical analysis of archaeological evidence, and be able to thinks comparatively and cross-culturally. They will be able to exercise their own initiative, and make decisions iun complex situations.

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 option modules). Students must choose such additional modules as they wish, in consultation with their programme adviser, to make 180 credits. The number of credits for each module is shown after its title.

Students must take three 10-credit modules in Research Skills including Research Resources and Skills and two technical optional modules (30 credits overall), three specialist optional modules of 20 credits each (60 credits overall), and write a dissertation (90 credits). Students who have not previously studied Archaeology are required to take Archaeological Thought as one of the research skills modules. A language module of 20 credits can be taken with the Institution-wide Language Programme in place of two of the research skills technical option modules where appropriate.

Compulsory modules:

Code	*Module title*	*Credits*	*Level*
ARMDIS	Dissertation	90	7
ARMR1D	Research Resources and Skills	10	7

Optional technical modules: Students select two from the following list:
(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. Admission to optional modules will be at the discretion of the Programme Director).

Code	*Module title*	*Credits*	*Level*
ARMR2D	Archaeological Thought	10	7
ARMR3D	Archaeological Graphics	10	7
ARMAM	Applications of Micromorphological Analysis	10	7
ARMLM	Laboratory Field Methods	10	7
ARMFM	Field Methods and Experimentation in Geoarchaeology	10	7
AQMLM	Quantitative Methods in Geoarchaeology	10	7

Or ONE *Language option* with the Institution-wide Language Programme 20 credits

Optional specialist modules: Students select three from the following list:
(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. Admission to optional modules will be at the discretion of the Programme Director).

Code	*Module title*	*Credits*	*Level*
ARMO4D	Burial Archaeology	20	7
ARMO5D	The Age of Hillforts in Britain	20	7
ARMO6D	The Age of Stonehenge in Britain	20	7
ARMO19D	Later Medieval Religion and Belief	20	7
ARMO22D	Roman Material Cuture	20	7
ARM023D	Micromorphology	20	7
ARMO26D	Expansion or Contraction in the Twelth Century?	20	7
ARMO28D	Palaeopathology	20	7
ARMO33D	Coastal and Maritime Archaeology	20	7
ARMO34D	The Archaeology of Food and Nutrition	20	7
ARMO39D	Later Anglo-Saxon England	20	7
ARMO43D	Archaeology of the Dark Ages	20	7
ARMO44D	Vegetation History and Archaebotany	20	7
ARMO45D	Human Osteology	20	7
ARMO49D	The Archaeology of Early Iran	20	7
ARMO50D	The Archaeology of Money: Coins. Power & Society	20	7

Part-time or modular arrangements
The programme may be undertaken over two years on a part-time basis. Selection of modules between the two years will be agreed between the student and the Board of Studies at the commencement of the programme. Research resources and skills is taken in the first term of the programme, and the Dissertation in the second year. It is anticipated that students will normally complete at least 80 credits' worth of modules in Year 1. Modules will be assessed in the year that they are taken. The programme may also be taken on a modular basis, with Research resources and skills being taken in the first term and the Dissertation being taken in the final year.

Progression requirements
N/A

Summary of Teaching and Assessment
The MA in Archaeology is assessed entirely by coursework, unless students are taking a language module as part of Research Skills that will involve formal oral and written examination as appropriate and Soils and Archaeology that includes an examination (70%). Research methods are taught through a series of workshops and seminars, and are assessed. The remaining technical skills options are taught through practical classes and assessed by written reports and/or portfolio. The specific teaching and learning methods vary between specialist optional modules, but all are based on a mixture of lectures, workshops, seminars and tutorials, and each module is assessed by a major essay and in some cases by a variety of other types of coursework, including oral presentation and critical review. The dissertation comprises a piece of independent research, directed through dissertation workshops plus a series of one-to-one tutorials, and is assessed by coursework and an oral presentation.

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

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

Awarding

For Masters Degrees (180 credits)
To pass the MA students must gain an average mark of 50 or more oveall 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 for all modules marked below 50 and 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 (120 credits)
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 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 (60 credits)
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.

Admission requirements
For acceptance onto the course, a student must already possess a good degree from a U.K. University (normally at least a 2.1 standard) or have equivalent qualifications from elsewhere.

Admissions Tutor: Professor Grenville Astill

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 (SEECC), 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

Career prospects
The Masters in Archaeology at Reading is both a route into archaeology (including field archaeology, museums and heritage management), and an excellent foundation for students wishing to pursue further research at higher degree level. It also forms the basis for other careers in the areas of the arts, media, management, administration, the civil service, local government, commerce, law, publishing, librarianship and teaching. A significant number of graduates have found positions in UK and European archaeology, either directly from their Master's degree, or following further postgraduate study.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

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

A. Knowledge and understanding of:	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
1. A comprehensive, systematic, and up-to-date knowledge of: • selected aspects of human societies from our earliest ancestors to the medieval period, particularly in Europe and the Mediterranean and Near East; • the diverse sources of evidence used by archaeologists, their variability and reliability 2. A critical awareness of a wide range of: • past and current methods by which archaeologists acquire, date and analyse their primary evidence • interpretative approaches applied to archaeological evidence in their historical, political and social context, including the most recent approaches; 3. A comprehensive understanding of a range of technical skills and/or methodologies, applicable to their specific research projects.	All areas are taught primarily through seminars and problem-oriented classwork, based on independent reading initially structured by bibliographies issued for each module. *Assessment* All knowledge and understanding is tested entirely by coursework, including the dissertation, with oral presentations making some contribution.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - *able to:*	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
1. to integrate and synthesise large quantities of archaeological and other data from multiple and diverse sources both systematically and creatively; 2. to make sophisticated and informed judgements in the absence of complete data; 3. to recognise and evaluate critically past and current theoretical approaches and competing interpretations; 4. to formulate individual research questions at a sophisticated level and identify strategies for exploring them; 5. to think critically and independently, and to propose new hypotheses as appropriate; 6. to synthesise and articulate arguments effectively, and to communicate the conclusions clearly; 7. to develop a critical self-awareness as a working archaeologist	These skills are developed throughout the programme, culminating in the dissertation. All option modules deal with questions of evidence and interpretation, through seminars, essays, and other coursework which require analysis and debate of intellectual problems. Awareness of current approaches is encouraged as options are usually linked to lecturers' research interests. Independent research skills are developed through essays and the dissertation, including the formulation of topics and the identification of methodologies, for which initial preparation and regular support are provided. Individual feedback is provided on content and organisation of coursework, and a formal oral presentation is part of the dissertation. *Assessment* Intellectual skills are tested entirely by coursework, especially the dissertation, with oral presentations making some contribution.
C. Practical skills - *able to:*	**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**
1. to locate, extract and appraise critically archaeological information in published sources and on the WWW; 2. to acquire, select and apply appropriate technical skills for specific archaeological tasks and/or	These skills are taught through the research methods modules and in dissertation workshops, and developed by application to the option modules and dissertation. Group discussion forms an essential part of most modules.

research projects;
3. to select and apply appropriate methodologies in assessing the meaning and significance of evidence or data
4. to plan and carry out a primary research project, working independently
5. to engage in group discussion and debate on archaeological issues

Assessment
Skills 1-4 are assessed indirectly through coursework and the dissertation. Technical and research skills are also assessed through classwork exercises and short reports.

D. Transferable skills - *able to:*

1. to communicate complex data and ideas clearly and effectively in speech and in a variety of types of writing;
2. to deal effectively with a variety of numerical data and visual material, using the most appropriate and up-to-date techniques;
3. to demonstrate self-direction and originality in devising strategies for solving problems, even in complex and unpredictable situations;
5. to continue to develop their knowledge, technical skills, and understanding to a high level;
6. to exercise their own initiative and personal responsibility

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

All these skills are essential for the successful completion of the programme.
Skill 1 is developed throughout the programme in the writing of essays, critiques and the dissertation, and by participation in seminars and a formal dissertation presentation. Skills 2, 3 and 6 are developed through the major essays and dissertation, and supported by the research methods and dissertation workshops. Skill 5 is particularly developed through the research methods and technical skills modules.

Assessment
These skills are assessed throughout the programme by a combination of coursework, essays, oral presentations, and dissertation.

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.