MA (Res) in Archaeology
For students entering in 2012/3

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

Summary of programme aims
The MA Research in Archaeology aims to provide advanced study and research training in Archaeology primarily as a foundation for further research at Doctoral Level and also for students who wish to develop research in particular areas of interest at postgraduate level and are either already employed in Archaeology or wish to pursue a career in Archaeology.

The MA Research in Archaeology aims to enable students:

- to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the substantive and conceptual issues in their chosen aspects of Archaeology
- to discuss research issues with practising researchers and specialists in their fields in order to develop critical awareness of current methods, problems and insights in advanced scholarship at the forefront of Archaeology
- to make a significant contribution in evaluating methodologies and developing critiques of them, and where appropriate, in proposing hypotheses and knowledge in essays and a dissertation
- to develop general and specific research skills and prepare them, where appropriate, for independent research at doctoral level, or to undertake a professional career and continue to engage in, and contribute to, scholarly research.

Transferable skills
In following this programme students will have had the opportunity to enhance their skills relating to research, communication of complex material (both written and oral) to specialist and non-specialist audiences, information handling, time management, problem-solving and decision making, self -directed learning and use of information and communication technology. The MA Research in Archaeology will enable students to develop skill such as: synthesising and evaluating data from a range of sources; providing a coherent overview and critique of competing theories and positions on a topic; developing arguments on the merits and limitations of these; and self-direction and originality in independent planning and production of a substantial piece of research under supervision in the dissertation, as a potential foundation for further study and continuing professional development.

Programme content

Code	Module title	Credits	Level
ARME1	Essay Module 1	20	7
ARME2	Essay Module 2	20	7
ARME3	Essay Module 3	20	7
ARMSP1	Seminar Presentation	10	7
ARMDW	Dissertation Workshops	10	7
ARMRD	Dissertation	100	7

Work for each module must be on a topic in Archaeology, which may include one or more themes from the following:
- Cognition and the Human Mind
- Social Identity and Gender
- Religion, Ritual and Belief
- Burial Archaeology

- Palaeo-health and -diet
- Life-cycle
- Migration
- Forensic Anthropology or Archaeology
- Archaeological Prospection
- Material Culture
- Buildings, Settlement, Urbanism
- Social Complexity
- Environmental Change
- Landscape

Topics can be selected from a wide range of early and later prehistoric and historical periods and regions including Britain, Europe, the Mediterranean, Western Asia and the Americas, including for example:

- Palaeolithic
- Neolithic
- Bronze Age
- Iron Age
- Classical periods
- Early and Later Medieval periods

Postgraduate Diploma in Archaeology (120 credits)
Either:

ARME1	Essay Module 1	20	7
ARMSP1	Seminar Presentation	10	7
ARMDW	Dissertation Workshops	10	7
ARMRP	Dissertation	80	7

Or:

ARME1	Essay Module 1	20	7
ARME2	Essay Module 2	20	7
ARME3	Essay Module 3	20	7
ARMSP1	Seminar Presentation	10	7
ARMRE	Extended Essay	50	7

Postgraduate Certificate in Archaeology (60 credits)

ARME1	Essay Module 1	20	7
ARME2	Essay Module 2	20	7
ARME3	Essay Module 3	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 at the commencement of the programme. It is anticipated that students will normally complete at least 60 credits' worth of modules in Year 1 and begin the Dissertation in Year 1. Modules will be assessed in the year that they are taken.

Progression requirements
None.

Summary of Teaching and Assessment
Teaching is primarily by means of individually supervised essays with regular tutorials and a supervised dissertation. Support and teaching for the Seminar Presentation module will be provided by staff with relevant expertise in the subject area and the Seminar Presentation Module Convenor. Teaching will be supplemented by classes and seminars where appropriate according to student interest, staff teaching and research activity, at the discretion of the Module Convenor and Programme Director.

Assessment and teaching terms are as follows:

Term	Code	Title	Assessment	Credits	Level
1	ARME1	Essay Module 1	5,000 word essay	20	7
1-2	ARME2	Essay Module 2	5,000 word essay	20	7
2	ARME3	Essay Module 3	5,000 word essay	20	7
1	ARMSP1	Seminar Presentation	Presentation	10	7
2	ARMDW	Dissertation Workshops	Dissertation proposal; presentation	10	7
3	ARMRD	Dissertation	25,000 words	100	7
3	ARMRP	Dissertation for Postgraduate Diploma	20,000 words	80	7
3	ARMRE	Extended Essay for Postgraduate Diploma	9,000 words	50	7

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

For Masters Degrees
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. 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
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 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 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.

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 and in Archaeology) or have equivalent qualifications or experience 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 MA Research in Archaeology at Reading provides an excellent foundation for students wishing to pursue further research at higher degree level. It also provides an opportunity for those already employed in Archaeology to develop research in particular areas of interest at postgraduate level and to acquire skills for professional advancement. The MA 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 Archaeology graduates have found positions in UK and European Archaeology, either directly from their Masters degree, or following further postgraduate study.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements
None.

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:

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 specific topic through writing of a dissertation

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

1. individual supervision of essays and dissertation
2. small group discussion in seminars and classes led by one or more members of staff
3. Dissertation Conference presentation prepared with the assistance of the supervisor and Dissertation Workshops

Assessment
1. Essays
2. Seminar presentation
3. Dissertation proposal and presentation
4. Dissertation

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - *able to:*

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;

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

These skills are developed throughout the individual supervision of essays and Dissertation, seminars, and Dissertation Workshops. All essay modules deal with questions of evidence and interpretation, through tutorials and essays which require analysis and debate of intellectual problems. Awareness of current approaches is encouraged and essay modules are usually linked to lecturers' research interests.

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

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.

Particular emphasis is on self-directed learning facilitated through the use of research-based teaching materials and methods.

Assessment
Intellectual skills are tested entirely by coursework, especially the dissertation, with oral presentations making some contribution.

C. Practical skills - *able to:*

1. to locate, extract and appraise critically archaeological information in published sources and on the WWW;
2. to select and apply appropriate methodologies in assessing the meaning and significance of evidence or data
3. to plan and carry out a primary research project, working independently
4. to engage in individual and group discussion and debate on archaeological issues

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

These skills are taught through the essay tutorials and in dissertation workshops, and developed by application to the essay modules and dissertation. Discussion forms a part of most modules. Attendance on the Masters Research Resources and Skills Module and Technical Modules are additional non-assessed options, at the discretion of student supervisor, Module Convenor, Programme Director, and dependent on student number.

Assessment
Skills 1-4 are assessed indirectly through coursework and the dissertation.

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;
4. manage time effectively and prioritise workloads
5. to continue to develop their knowledge 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 and the dissertation, and by participation in seminar module and a formal dissertation presentation. Skills 2-6 are developed through the essays and dissertation, and supported by the dissertation workshops.

Assessment
These skills are assessed throughout the programme by a combination of 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.