

**MA (Res) in French Studies (full-time)**  
**For students entering in 2013/4**

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 year
Date of specification:	23/Aug/2013
Programme Director:	Dr Daniela La Penna
Programme Advisor:	
Board of Studies:	Board of Studies for Postgraduate Programmes in French
Accreditation:	

**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**

Code	Title	Credits	Level
	<i>Compulsory modules</i>		
FRM11	Introduction to Advanced Study and Research Methodology	30	7
FRM12	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.

Code	Title	Credits	Level
FRM13	Option Module 1	30	7
FRM14	Option Module 2	30	7
FRM15	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 MA programme in the University. The selection of options and the dissertation should be complementary, and form a coherent and appropriate whole.

**Part-time or 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.

## **Progression requirements**

N/A

## **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.

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**

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 not exceed 55 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 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 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.

## **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:** Dr Daniela La Penna

### **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 Careers, Placement and Experience Centre (CPEC), In-session 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, academic issues (eg problems with module selection) and exam related queries. 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](http://www.reading.ac.uk/student)

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

### **Programme Outcomes**

#### **Knowledge and Understanding**

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

1. Selected aspects of the culture and history of French
2. The original sources relevant to their chosen Options and Dissertation topic
3. The secondary literature covering the chosen period or theme
4. The critical and theoretical vocabulary associated with their areas of study
5. 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

*Assessment*

#### **Skills and other attributes**

##### **B. Intellectual skills - able to:**

##### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

1. Analyse critically French texts and/or films or a period of history
2. Show a good understanding of different historical and theoretical approaches to French culture
3. Develop an individual approach to the subject matter of their chosen module
4. Use critically secondary literature to support their own views.
5. 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*

**C. Practical skills - able to:**

1. Read and assimilate texts in a variety of registers, dialects and critical languages of French.
2. Use research facilities such as the library, archives and the internet appropriately and efficiently
3. Organise and focus their own learning and development
4. Plan and write a dissertation

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

- 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*

**D. Transferable skills - able to:**

1. Present complex arguments and material in oral or written form of
2. Analyse source and critical material to provide support for personal interpretation
3. Use IT skills in oral and written presentations
4. Develop postgraduate level study, research and writing skills
5. Analyse and think critically about complex texts and issues
6. Communicate clearly to others their own thinking and the reasons for it
7. 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

*Assessment*

**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.**