

## **MRes in Medieval Studies (full-time)**

### **For students entering in 2014/5**

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:	12 months
Date of specification:	08/Sep/2014
Programme Director:	Dr Anne Lawrence
Programme Advisor:	
Board of Studies:	Graduate Centre for Medieval Studies
Accreditation:	

### **Summary of programme aims**

The MRes 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;
- To enable students to deal with a multidisciplinary approach (via a compulsory core modules which give students thorough and wide-ranging training in relevant areas);
- To develop students' linguistic and palaeographic skills;
- To promote independent study and research skills as a basis, where appropriate, for a research degree.

### **Transferable skills**

The University's 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 (20 credits), introducing skills and approaches necessary for research in the field/s of medieval studies. A further compulsory module (30 credits) gives training in Medieval Latin and Medieval Palaeography. Two Options (20 credits each) are chosen from a broad range, offering the opportunity for independent research with a scholar in the field; one should be linked to the dissertation topic. One Option may be replaced by a module offered in another MA programme; and one Option may take the form of learning a modern or a medieval vernacular language. The Dissertation (90 credits, 20,000 words) provides for extensive independent research, and includes an Oral Presentation which contributes 10% of the overall mark for the Dissertation. The relationship between the related 4,000 word Option essay and the Dissertation must be discussed with the supervisor(s) and Programme Director.

### **MRes 180 credits:**

Compulsory modules

Code	Title	Credits	Level
MSMRM	Researching the Middle Ages	20	M
MSMLP	Medieval Latin and Palaeography	30	M
MSMDI7	Dissertation	90	M
MSMSTA	Option A	20	M
MSMSTB	Option B	20	M

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. It is expected that Option B will be the Option which provides preliminary study for the Dissertation; but this is subject to staff availability.

### **Postgraduate Diploma in Medieval Studies (120 credits)**

Students take the following modules:

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

Certificate in Medieval Studies (60 credits)

Students take the following modules:

Code	Title	Credits	Level
MSMRM2	Researching the Middle Ages	20	M
MSMSTA	Option A	20	M
MSMSTB	Option B	20	M

### **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 (over up to two years); Palaeography and Medieval Latin; Options; Dissertation, but this may be varied by agreement.

### **Progression requirements**

#### **Summary of Teaching and Assessment**

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 a dossier of student work. 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, excluding footnotes, bibliography and appropriate appendices. Classification will follow the University's taught postgraduate marks classification.

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 be less than 60 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.

Students have the right to one re-sit of any failed element (below 40) for a pass mark of 50. They may wish to re-submit an element marked at 40-49, again for a mark of 50, but are not obliged to do so. Taught modules will normally be re-examined within the term of original submission; but a failed Dissertation is due for re-submission within one year of the original submission date.

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 be less than 60 credits.

For the 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 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)

In addition, the GCMS has its own dedicated room offering a private study area supported by its own specialised library, with access to printers and the internet.

### **Career prospects**

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

### **Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**

Where appropriate, opportunities are open to individual students to study in France in the University of Paris VII, with which the School of History has links. The Erasmus Programme makes many other options available. Further details are available via the programme director.

### **Programme Outcomes**

The programme aims to provide graduate students with a thorough grounding in contemporary approaches to key aspects of medieval culture. In particular, it aims to develop a systematic approach to the acquisition of knowledge together with a critical awareness of current issues of debate and the ability to evaluate and develop appropriate conceptual frameworks. It thus prepares students for study at doctoral level by equipping them with the tools necessary for further independent research.

## **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, included timed tests, essays and a dissertation.

## **Skills and other attributes**

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

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

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

Intellectual skills are developed through formal teaching, participation in informal activities, independent research, presentations, and the writing of essays and a dissertation.

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*:**

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 or 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*:**

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

### *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.**