

**MRes Modern Languages (full-time)
For students entering in 2015/6**

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:	25/Aug/2015
Programme Director:	Dr Daniela La Penna
Programme Advisor:	
Board of Studies:	Modern Languages and European Studies
Accreditation:	

Summary of programme aims

The MRes is principally intended as a preparation for those intending to proceed to research in language-specific discipline (French Studies, German Studies, Spanish and Latin American Studies, and Italian 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. Depending on their language ability and qualifications, and on their research interests in Modern Languages, students will acquire a critical and historical awareness and understanding of selected aspects of European, Latin American, and Francophone cultures (including film), 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 literature, social and political history, cinema, and contemporary poetry in the select language-specific field of study. They will have an opportunity to develop advanced reading skills in the target language(s). The Department will offer the opportunity to suitably qualified applicants to take options in the following pathways: French Studies, Italian Studies, German Studies, Spanish and Latin American Studies, Comparative Literature, Film Studies. It will be possible for students to take options in two different language-specific topics provided that the student(s) demonstrate adequate proficiency (at least B1 in the European Language Framework) in the select target languages (Comparative Literature Pathway). A number of topics in Film Studies are available and this will enable students to undertake MRes study in the Film Studies pathway.

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

Compulsory

MLM11	Introduction to Advanced Study and Research Methodology	30	7
MLM12	Dissertation	90	7

In special circumstances, students may be allowed to take a relevant and adequate 30-credit research methodology module (or module suite of 30 credits) from another MRes programme. This will need to be approved by the Programme Directors of the MRes programmes involved.

Optional

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 20- or 30-credit module may be taken from another MRes programme in the University. This option will not be made available to those students who are taking 30-credit Research methodology module or a 30-credit research methodology module suite from a different MRes programme. 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.

MLM13	Option Module 1	30	7
MLM14	Option Module 2	30	7
MLM15	Option Module 3 (for the Postgraduate Diploma only)	30	7
MLM16	Option Module 4 (for students taking a 20 credit M module from another programme)	10	7

Placement Option Module (by special arrangement and with prior Programme Director's approval.

In place of one of these, a relevant 20- or 30-credit module may be taken from another MRes programme in the University. If the student selects a 20-credit module, s/he is allowed to take the 10-credit MLM16. 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 MLM11 (or equivalent from a different MA programme on a cognate discipline) and one or two option modules, if they wish to do so; in the second year, the second optional module (if not taken in first year) and the dissertation.

Progression requirements

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 MRes 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 (or equivalent from a different MRes programme on a cognate discipline), 60 credits for coursework in the Option Modules and 90 credits for the dissertation.

To pass the MRes students must gain an average mark of 50% or more overall including a mark of 50% or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40% in modules MLM11 (or equivalent from a different MA programme on a cognate discipline) and MLM13. 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

A Diploma may be awarded on completion of at least 120 credits to be made up of 30 credits for MLM11, Introduction to Advanced Study and Research Methodology (or equivalent from a different MRes programme on a cognate discipline) and 90 credits coursework from MLM13, MLM14, MLM15 and MLM17 (or a 20-credit MA module from another programme and the 10-credit module MLM16).

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50% or more and have no mark below 40% in modules MLM11 (or equivalent from a different MA programme on a cognate discipline) and MLM13. 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 Certificates

A certificate may be awarded on the completion of at least 60 credits in two of MLM11 (or equivalent from a different MRes programme on a cognate discipline), MLM13, MLM14 or MLM17.

To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more and have no mark below 40% in modules MLM11 (or equivalent from a different MRes programme on a cognate discipline) and MLM13. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.

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 5,000 words or equivalent as required for each Option Module
- By one essay or similar assignment with a total of 4,000 words for MLM11 (or equivalent from a different MRes programme on a cognate discipline)
- and finally by a dissertation of 20,000 words (100% of the module mark), together with a presentation on the dissertation topic to be held in September (formative coursework).

The Dissertation must be submitted by the end of September. The presentation based on the dissertation topic portfolio must normally be held in September shortly after the submission of the dissertation. Assessed work, including the dissertation, may be submitted in either English or in the relevant target language. All assessed essays should be submitted by the end of the Summer Term.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained a good first degree in a relevant subject, normally at least a 2.i. Depending on the pathway chosen, good knowledge of either French, German, Italian, or Spanish is essential.

Admissions Tutor: Dr Daniela La Penna (d.lapenna@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

Career prospects

- Doctoral research leading to an academic career
- Secondary and further education
- Librarianship
- Archivist
- Media
- 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

MRes students may apply for the Erasmus Exchange with select European universities for a maximum of three months. How and whether the Erasmus programme can best benefit the individual intellectual needs of the students and support the research to be undertaken for the MRes dissertation, will be discussed with the Programme Director together with the Dissertation supervisor by the end of the Autumn Term.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

- Selected aspects of the culture and history of the language specific national domains.
- The original sources relevant to their chosen Options and Dissertation topic
- The secondary literature covering the chosen period or theme
- The critical and theoretical vocabulary associated with their areas of study
- 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 European and language-specific 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

These skills will be assessed through:

- presentations,
- reflective feedback on research seminar papers within the research seminar series of the Department of Modern Languages and the Faculty-wide research events,
- written papers (formative assessment) and essays
- analytical bibliographies and reviews of key scholarly works on given topics.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - *able to*:

- Analyse critically texts written in the original language and/or films or a period of history
- Show a good understanding of different historical and theoretical approaches to the language-specific culture
- Develop an individual approach to the subject matter of their chosen module
- Use critically secondary literature to support their own views.
- Present a coherently argued and structured defence of their interpretation of the material in their course

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

- 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

These skills will be assessed through:

- presentations,
- reflective feedback on research seminar papers within the research seminar series of the Department of Modern Languages and the Faculty-wide research events,
- written papers (formative assessment) and essays

- bibliographies and reviews of key scholarly works on given topics.

C. Practical skills - *able to:*

1. Read and assimilate texts in a variety of registers, dialects and critical languages of the language-specific tradition(s).
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

1. 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
2. The Option modules will enable students to put into practice research and drafting skills
3. The Dissertation will enable students to prepare, plan and write a sustained and substantial piece of original research.

Assessment

These skills will be assessed through:

- presentations, reflective feedback on research seminar papers within the research seminar series of the Department of Modern Languages and the Faculty-wide research events, written papers (formative assessment) and essays
- bibliographies and reviews of key scholarly works on given topics.

D. Transferable skills - *able to:*

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

1. Students will read, analyse and discuss a wide variety of texts and issues for seminars and essays
2. Undertake directed and independent research
3. Discussions and written essays will develop student abilities to present information and analysis in oral and written form
4. The Oral presentation of the Dissertation research will develop students' ability to engage in formal debate
5. Students are introduced to a broad range of resources including library and digital research tools
6. Possibilities for further postgraduate study at PhD level are discussed where relevant

Assessment

These skills will be assessed through:

- presentations, reflective feedback on research seminar papers within the research seminar series of the Department of Modern Languages and the Faculty-wide research events, written papers (formative assessment) and essays
- bibliographies and reviews of key scholarly works on given topics.

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.