

**BA History and English Literature**  
**For students entering Part 1 in 2015/6**

**UCAS code: QV31**

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	History and English
Faculty:	Arts, Humanities and Social Science Faculty
Programme length:	3 years
Date of specification:	30/Jan/2017
Programme Director:	Prof Patrick Major
Programme Advisor:	Dr Chloe Houston Mrs Deborah King
Board of Studies:	History
Accreditation:	

**Summary of programme aims**

This is a multi-disciplinary programme which aims to provide students with subject specific knowledge and more general skills, including knowledge of a variety of different kinds of literary and historical texts, from a range of different periods, as well as perspectives on different methods of critical and interpretative analysis. The programme also aims to foster an independent approach to formulating problems and arguments, using the close reading, analytical skills and knowledge base that are fundamental to the disciplines of History and English.

**Transferable skills**

During the course of their studies at Reading, all students will be expected to enhance their academic and personal transferable skills. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop such skills, in particular relating to communication, interpersonal skills, learning skills, numeracy, self-management, use of IT and problem-solving and will have been encouraged to further develop and enhance the full set of skills through a variety of opportunities available outside their curriculum.

History is a discipline which lends itself to critical judgement and problem-solving, both through personal engagement with issues and through dialogue and group discussion. Also integral is the collection, collation and analysis of substantial quantities of material and its communication and presentation. History also prompts an awareness of numeracy through chronology, periodisation, and basic quantification. In addition, the development of powerful tools of research, analysis and presentation associated with information technology is reflected in several ways, such as in the location and retrieval of bibliographic and source material, the production and presentation of student work, and, where appropriate, the use of more sophisticated databases and exploitation of the internet.

In English: On completion of this programme, students are expected to have developed a range of transferable skills including: fluency in writing and oral communication, the ability to formulate and evaluate their own arguments and those of others, to translate subject-specific knowledge and skills to new environments, the ability to find and use relevant information resources, to manage their time effectively, and use basic word-processing and IT skills; the ability to work cooperatively with others.

**Programme content**

Each Part comprises 120 credits. In Part 1 60 credits must be taken in both History and Politics. In Part 2 Students must normally take 60 credits in both subjects, and in Part 3 students take 40 credits in each subject plus a dissertation, in one subject or the other, of 40 credits.

Part 1 introduces students to the disciplines through study of historical causation, contextualisation and the utilisation of both primary and secondary sources in History and, in English, through textual analysis, criticism, and genre. In Part 2 students are required to engage with a broad span of historical and literary topics which develop both their range of knowledge and their analytical/critical skills. Part 3 involves the study in depth of topics through the History modules which require that students apply their analytical skills in focussed areas and undertake independent research.

## Part 1 (three terms)

### *Compulsory modules*

<i>Code</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
HS1RSO	Research Skills and Opportunities in History	20	4
HS1JH1	Journeys through History1: Power and People	20	4
HS1JH2	Journeys through History 2: Culture and Concept	20	4
EN1GC	Genre and Context	20	4
EN1PE	Poetry in English	20	4
EN1RC	Research and Criticism	20	4

## Part 2 (three terms)

### **In History (60 credits)**

Students must take 60 credits: These can be chosen from the list of Option modules or students may wish to replace one or two Option modules with one of more of the core modules My Career: Working it Out, Public History: Its Uses and Abuses, and/or Historical Approaches and My Dissertation (HS2HAD Historical Approaches and My Dissertation is recommended if taking a History Dissertation) A list of Option modules can be obtained from the Department of History.

### **In English (60 credits)**

Students choose three optional modules in Part 2, at least one in the Autumn and one in the Spring terms. At least one module must be chosen from a list of pre-1800 modules. Optional modules may vary from year to year. A full list is available from the Programme Adviser and can also be found in the Part 2 Module Supplement.

## Part 3 (three terms)

### *Compulsory modules*

Students can take a 40-credit dissertation in either department.

HS3HLD	Dissertation in History	40	6
or			
EN3DIS	Dissertation in English	40	6

### **In History**

Students must take two 20 credit Part 3 Options and one Special Subject consisting of a co-requisite paper A and paper B of 20 credits each (40 credits in total). A 20 credit module offered elsewhere in the University may replace one 20-credit Part 3 Option.

A complete list of Options and Special Subjects is available from the Department of History.

### **In English**

Students choose two modules totalling 40 credits from a list of options. Optional modules vary from year to year and are published in the Part 3 Module Supplement available from the department. Admission to optional modules is at the discretion of the Programme Director.

### **Progression requirements**

To progress from Part one to Part two, students must achieve:

1. an overall average of 40% over the 120 credits taken in Part 1, and
2. obtain at least 40% in each compulsory module, and
3. achieve a mark of at least 30% in modules representing a total of at least 100 credits.

To gain a threshold performance at Part 2 to progress to Part 3, a student shall normally be required to achieve:

- (i) a weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken at Part 2;
- (ii) marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits; and
- (iii) marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 120 credits.

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

Mark	interpretation
70% - 100%	First class
60% - 69%	Upper Second class
50% - 59%	Lower Second class
40% - 49%	Third class
35% - 39%	Below Honours Standard
0% - 34%	Fail

#### **In History**

All Parts are assessed by a mixture of coursework and timed examination. At all levels, independent research is expected and encouraged. It is most apparent and significant in the preparation of the Dissertation at Parts 2 and 3, although individual supervisory support is also provided.

At Part 1, teaching in the core modules Journeys through History 1 & 2, and Research Skills and Opportunities in History, is by large group lectures augmented by seminars; assessment is by written assignment only, not timed examination. Options are taught by seminar and assessed by a mixture of written assignment and timed examination.

At Part 2 teaching is by a mixture of lectures and seminars. The Part 2 core modules Historical Approaches/My Dissertation and Public History/My Career are assessed by written assignment only. Options are assessed by a mixture of written assignment and timed examination.

At Part 3 teaching is predominantly by seminar. Special Subjects involve close document readings and are assessed by timed examination and written assignment. Options are taught by lectures and seminars and assessed by a mixture of written assignment and timed examination. Two optional Part 3 modules, History Education and Discovering Archives and Collections, are assessed by a mixture of performance on a 10-day placement, written coursework and oral presentation. The Dissertation involves supervised independent research, and includes an element of oral presentation.

#### **Admission requirements**

A levels: AAB - ABB from three A levels including a B in History/Ancient History.

IB: 35-32points overall including 5 in History at higher level.

Those not offering A level or IB qualifications are advised to contact the Admissions Office as to the acceptability of their qualifications. For those whose education has not been undertaken in English, the IELTS requirement is 7.0, with no language component under 6.0.

**Admissions Tutor:** Dr Rachel Foxley

#### **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-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, 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 the Department of History, students are assigned Personal Tutors, and have online study tips via Blackboard, as well as the Studying History at Reading Handbook, which provides most of this information in one handy booklet. The Department also runs a Facebook and Twitter page which will give updates on forthcoming events. Additional support is given through orientation sessions on module choices, and Dissertation advice. There is full written feedback on assessed work. Each module teacher gives personal guidance and feedback and sends termly reports on progress to Personal Tutors for discussion with students. There is also a History Resource Room which provides quiet study space.

Students in English receive Handbooks which give details of the programme, guidance on study skills such as note-taking and essay writing, and information about staff, facilities, and sources of specialized help within the University, such as the Study Skills Advisor and the Counselling Service. The English programme is designed to give students extensive teaching support in Part 1 leading to more independent work in Part 3. Academic feedback and guidance is given through one-to-one essay tutorials, and academic and personal support is provided through the personal tutor system. Dissertation workshops prepare students for the Part 3 dissertation which is individually supervised. The Geoffrey Matthews Collection, housed in the School of English, provides books, xeroxed materials, cassettes and an extensive collection of videos for loan to students. A video-viewing suite is available within the Faculty. The Library is well-stocked with printed materials as well as electronic databases, such as the OED, the MLA Bibliography, and the DNB on CD ROM, and such on-line resources as JSTOR, and First Search. Specialist subject librarians are available to give students advice and guidance to library resources.

Liaison Officers for both History and English coordinate the programme.

### **Career learning**

Students are trained in clear thinking, research skills, diligence, independence, adaptability and the ability to understand people and situations in the world at large. As such, they are eagerly sought after by employers. In addition they are given specific vocational training and orientation through the Part 2 My Career: Working It Out module, and the third year optional modules, History Education and Discovering Archives and Collections.

### **Career prospects**

History and English graduates are trained in clear thinking, research skills, diligence, independence, adaptability and the ability to understand people and situations in the world at large. As such they are eagerly sought after by employers. Past graduates have used their degree as a springboard for various areas of employment such as accountancy, banking and commerce, law, publishing, journalism, the media, public relations, information science, museum work, teaching and social work. Many also enter the business world through management training schemes operated by national companies in retailing, marketing, sales, computing, while others go into the civil service and local government. Graduates go on to postgraduate study in both at MA and PhD level, at Reading and elsewhere.

### **Opportunities for study abroad**

As part of the degree programme students may have the opportunity to study abroad at an institution with which the University has a valid exchange agreement. These currently exist for North America, Europe and Australia.

Study abroad normally takes place at Part 2. Students will pursue a slightly modified version of the home programme, and bring back work from their host institution which will count towards their degree. Students wishing to study abroad will require the consent of the Departmental study abroad coordinator form both departments in order to participate. Full details of potential destinations can be found on both the Erasmus and Study Abroad websites.

During your time at Reading you will also have the opportunity to develop non-vocational skills, gain new work experiences, and further boost your employability through a diverse range of other placement opportunities. The University's Careers, Placement and Experience Centre (CPEC) provides all Reading students with information about a wide range of placement opportunities (<http://www.reading.ac.uk/careers/placements/>), including the Summer Enterprise Experience & Discovery internship scheme (<http://www.reading.ac.uk/careers/placements/seed/>), the Community Service Volunteering scheme (tutoring in

local schools; <http://www.reading.ac.uk/studentrecruitment/StudentTutoring/sr-studenttutoringinschools.aspx>), the Student Tutoring Scheme (work experience in local schools; [http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/urop/urop\\_home.aspx](http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/urop/urop_home.aspx)), and the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme (UROP; [http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/urop/urop\\_home.aspx](http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/urop/urop_home.aspx)).

### **Placement opportunities**

The Discovering Archives and Collections module and the History Education module at Part 3 give students the opportunity to experience a professional placement in either archive work or teaching, which also encourages engagement with forward-thinking career planning. Students also have the opportunity to take any one module in English Literature at Part 2 or Part 3 as a placement module.

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### **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. Literary texts in English from selected periods between the Middle Ages and the present day
2. A range of kinds of texts including fiction, poetry and drama
3. Methods of critical textual analysis
4. Ways in which social, cultural and historical issues relate to texts
5. A range of approaches in English studies
6. Selected specialised fields within English studies
7. The broad sweep of post-classical history and its principal divisions
8. A range of eras and cultures and more focussed historical themes and issues
9. The contextualisation of forces, events, and individual experiences in the historical process
10. The nature and variety of historical sources as defined by period and culture
11. The nature of debate and dispute in historical writing.

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

Knowledge and understanding are gained through formal teaching (lectures, seminar discussions, and individual essay feedback), prescribed and recommended reading, and the writing of essays and a dissertation. In English, Part 1 modules offer a broad introduction to 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, while in History they introduce students to 7, 10 and 11 in particular. In Part 2 modules the understanding and skills acquired at Part 1 are developed with particular emphasis in English on 1, 2 and 4 and in History on 7, 8, 9 and 11 through seminars, lectures and individual feedback. Part 3 modules introduce more specialized study, particularly in relation to 3, 5, 6, 8, 10 and 11 through a choice of seminar-based modules together with supervised, independent study leading to a dissertation.

##### *Assessment*

At Parts 1 and 2, knowledge and understanding of 1 - 11 are tested through a combination of essays and written examinations. At Part 3, assessment is through a mixture of methods, such as extended essays, essays plus unseen exams, and the dissertation (including oral presentation).

## Skills and other attributes

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

1. Capacity for independent analysis and research
2. Identification of problems and issues and the ability to formulate arguments based on evidence
3. The ability to read closely and critically and to be able to demonstrate the interrelationships between primary and secondary sources
4. An ability to reflect on ones own positions and to challenge received conclusions
5. Accumulate and apply information in a structured manner

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

1. To develop and carry out individual research programmes and strategies
2. The ability to criticize and formulate interpretations of texts
3. An ability to engage in critical argument using relevant evidence or theoretical approaches
4. Bibliographical and research skills
5. A knowledge of appropriate conventions in the presentation of written work
6. An awareness of the rhetorical resources of the English language
7. An ability to relate the study of English to cultural and social issues
8. The location and synthesis of large quantities of historical materials
9. The use of IT to access sources and information

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

1. Fluency in written and oral communication
2. The ability to formulate and present arguments
3. Assessing the merits of competing approaches
4. The ability to translate subject-specific knowledge and skills into other environments
5. The ability to find and use relevant information resources
6. Time -management skills
7. A creative approach to problem-solving
8. Group and interpersonal skills
9. An ability to self-evaluate and self-reflect
10. Use of information technology, especially word-processing

### Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Intellectual skills are acquired through independent reading (1), seminar preparation and discussion, and essay writing (1 - 5) and essay feedback through tutorials (2, 3 and 4).

#### *Assessment*

1 - 3 are assessed both formatively in coursework essays, and summatively in essays and unseen exams. 1- 5 are assessed formatively through seminar discussion and essay feedback and tutorials.

### Teaching/learning methods and strategies

1-5 are common to both disciplines and are developed in seminars, essays and essay tutorials. 4-5 are developed, in particular through dissertation guidance and supervision. 3 and 6 are specific to English and are developed in seminars, essays and essay tutorials. 8 and 9 relate to History and are developed through essays and seminar preparation in particular.

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#### *Assessment*

All the subject specific practical skills are assessed through formative and summative essays. 1 - 3 and 6 are also tested in unseen examinations.

### Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Transferable skills are developed through seminar discussions (1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 9), through seminar presentations, essay writing, tutorial feedback and unseen examinations (1 - 9). 4 and 7 particularly are developed through requiring students to draw on acquired knowledge and skills when analyzing new material in essays and unseen examinations. 5 and 10 are developed through use of the library and other sources of information, for seminar preparation, essay writing and research for the dissertation. We require that all summatively assessed essays are word-processed (10).

#### *Assessment*

1 - 7 and 9 are formatively assessed through coursework essays and seminar presentations, and summatively assessed through essays, unseen examinations, and the dissertation. 9 is encouraged through essay feedback. 8 is encouraged through seminars and in tutorials.

**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.**