

Programme Specification

MA Classics and Ancient History (full-time)

PFTZCLAXAHHM

MA Classics and Ancient History (part-time)

PPTZCLAXAHHM

For students entering in 2027/28

This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	MA Classics and Ancient History (full-time) - 12 months MA Classics and Ancient History (part-time) - 2 years
Accreditation	N/A
Programme Start Dates	September
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	N/A

Programme information and content

The programme aims to provide both a transition between first degree level work and doctoral research in the various fields of Classics, and an opportunity for students to expand their knowledge of the ancient world and to research new or specialist topics. It offers an introduction to the techniques, methods, and tools of advanced study and research. The provision is multidisciplinary, combining literary, historical, artistic and archaeological approaches. A wide choice of pathways enables students to follow their own preferences in terms of disciplinary approach and period. Teaching in optional modules and dissertation supervision is geared towards the development of students as individual and independent researchers.

In the first semester students take 'Research Methods' and 'Approaches to the Classical World'. Together these modules introduce them to discipline-specific tools of research and also to the defining techniques and approaches of the discipline, including an introduction to the history of Classical Scholarship. Students will practise relevant skills and be assessed on a research proposal, a book review, and set exercises.

In the second semester students take two Special Options modules, chosen from a list which broadly corresponds to the research interests of the lecturers in the Department. For each topic students will complete formative exercises, undertake independent research, engage in discussion, and submit a final essay. These optional modules offer a range of in-depth studies of aspects of the ancient world that develop students' skills with primary sources and with advanced literary, historical, artistic or cultural analysis. Assessment is by one 4000 word essay per module.

Students may replace these two optional modules with one 40-credit module in Study Abroad. Students will be supported in choosing an appropriate summer school or other means of studying abroad. The Department has established relationships with the British

School at Rome and the British School at Athens. Assessment will be determined in conjunction with the overseas institution.

Students are also expected to take a module in Ancient Greek or Latin language at an appropriate level from beginner to advanced. The language modules run throughout the year, with a variety of assessments both formative and summative.

With the agreement of the Programme Director students may replace one Special Options module with a module in a second ancient language.

The Dissertation module requires independent research, planning and writing. The dissertation is 20,000 words long and is supervised throughout the year.

Programme Learning Outcomes

-MA Classics and Ancient History (full-time)

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

	Learning outcomes
1	Recognition and use of discipline-specific tools of research and enquiry.
2	Recognition and use of a range of approaches and methods to the primary materials of the ancient world.
3	Engaging in specialised study of specific topics in Classics and Ancient History, and becoming acquainted with recent research on these topics.
4	Developing research skills, including the ability to plan and produce a substantial piece of research under supervision, as a foundation for further study.
5	Having a good grasp of at least one ancient language.
6	Developing skills of communication both written and oral.
7	Developing a range of skills useful both for further research and in the workplace, such as time management and organisation.

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

Module information

The programme comprises 180 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Compulsory modules

Module	Name	Credits	Level
CLMACW	Approaches to the Classical World	20	M

CLMDS	Dissertation	80	M
CLMRES	Research Methods	20	M

Students must select two 20 credit Special Options modules available in the Department of Classics or one 40 credit Study Abroad module, which would be subject to the agreement of the Programme Director. One 20 credit Special Options module may be replaced by a module available outside the Department from an approved list of modules.

Students must in addition select one 20 credit module in Ancient Greek or Latin at the appropriate level.

Part-time or flexible modular arrangements

The programme can be taken part-time over two years. The modules taken in each year are agreed on an individual basis with the Programme Director, but it is usual for a student to take the compulsory modules CLMACW Approaches to the Classical World and CLMRES Research Methods in the first semester of study. Special Option topics may be split across the two years of study. The programme may not be completed over more than two years.

Placement opportunities

N/A

Study abroad opportunities

With the agreement of the Programme Director students may find a suitable Study Abroad opportunity and take the module CLMOP3 instead of CLMOP1 and CLMOP2. Students will be supported in finding a suitable opportunity.

Optional modules

The optional modules available can vary from year to year. An indicative list of the range of optional modules for your programme can be found online in the Course Catalogue. Details of optional modules for each part, including any additional costs associated with the optional modules, will be made available to you prior to the beginning of the Part in which they are to be taken and you will be given an opportunity to express interest in the optional modules that you would like to take. Entry to optional modules will be at the discretion of the University and subject to availability and may be subject to pre-requisites, such as completion of another module. Although the University tries to ensure you are able to take the optional modules in which you have expressed interest this cannot be guaranteed.

Teaching and learning delivery

Students are taught in small groups, with plenty of individual support, or by individual supervision. Feedback is given regularly both verbal and written. Students may also benefit from field trips, visits to museums, theatres or galleries, depending on the options selected. Students are required to attend the weekly research seminar series and, following the talk, to discuss the successful or less successful aspects of the presentation. Students

have the use of a dedicated postgraduate room where they may study independently or as a group.

Total study hours for your programme will be 1800 hours. The contact hours for your programme will depend upon your module combination; an average for a typical set of modules on this programme is 190 hours.

Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology.

The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for your programme will depend upon your module combination. In addition, you will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which give some flexibility for you to choose when to complete them. You will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details

N/A

Assessment

Assessment is divided over the two teaching semesters, but the dissertation is submitted in September. Feedback is given on all completed assessments, and individual supervision of the dissertation includes feedback on draft chapters. Assessment is calibrated so that students produce increasingly substantial work, culminating in the dissertation of 20,000 words. Language assessment is distributed across the year, with regular formative tests as well as at least 2 summative assignments per module.

For the Dissertation, students work with a Supervisor on an individual basis. The Research Methods module is assessed through a book review and research proposal. The Approaches to the Classical World module is assessed through a portfolio of set exercises. The Special Options module is assessed by two 4,000 word essays, one per option. Language modules are assessed by a combination of written assignments and formal examination. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Progression

N/A

Classification

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 Master's Degree

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Master's degree:

Award of a Master's degree

- (i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 180 credits
- (ii) a mark of 50% or more in at least 120 credits
- (iii) no credits with a mark below 40%
- (iv) a mark of 50% or more for the Dissertation

In addition to the threshold conditions for the award of a Master's degree, the following **further** conditions must be satisfied for a classification of Distinction or Merit:

Distinction

An overall weighted average of 70% or more over 180 credits

OR

an overall weighted average of 68% or more over 180 credits and marks of 70% in at least 90 credits

AND

Where the dissertation is included in the conditions for the award of a Master's degree, a mark of at least 60% in the dissertation

AND

No marks below 40%.

Merit

An overall weighted average of 60% or more over 180 credits

OR

an overall average of 58% or more over 180 credits and marks of 60% in at least 90 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

For Postgraduate Diploma

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma:

Award of a Postgraduate Diploma

- (i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 120 credits
- (ii) a mark of 50% or more in at least 80 credits
- (iii) no credits with a mark below 40%

In addition to the threshold conditions for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, the following further conditions must be satisfied for a classification of Distinction or Merit:

Distinction

An overall weighted average of 70% or more over 120 credits

OR

an overall weighted average of 68% or more over 120 credits and marks of 70% in at least 60 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

Merit

An overall weighted average of 60% or more over 120 credits

OR

an overall average of 58% or more over 120 credits and marks of 60% in at least 60 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

For Postgraduate Certificate

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate:

Award of a Postgraduate Certificate

- (i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 60 credits
- (ii) No credits with a mark below 40%.

Details of the classification method is given in detail in the [Assessment Handbook](#) under:

- Section 19: Awards: Postgraduate Master's, Postgraduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate

Please note that there may be a specific version for your year of entry.

Additional costs of the programme

Students may wish to purchase personal copies of various primary source texts, particularly those used in higher-level language classes. £100-£200 should be budgeted for this.

Printing and photocopying facilities are available on campus at a cost per A4 page of £0.05 (black and white) and £0.30 (colour). Essential costs in this area will be low as most coursework is submitted electronically.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2026.

Students may consider purchasing a laptop to help support their learning. Information on recommended device specifications can be found on the [DTS Student Hub](#).

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

MA Classics and Ancient History (full-time) for students entering in session 2027/28
28 July 2026

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