

## Programme Specification

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### History (2021-22)

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 s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

Awarding Institution	University of Southampton
Teaching Institution	University of Southampton
Mode of Study	Full-time
Duration in years	1
Accreditation details	None
Final award	Master of Arts (MA)
Name of award	History
Interim Exit awards	Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education
FHEQ level of final award	Level 7
UCAS code	
Programme code	4157
QAA Subject Benchmark or other external reference	Master's Degree Characteristics 2016
Programme Lead	Chris Woolgar

### Programme Overview

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#### Brief outline of the programme

The programme can be studied Part Time (4158).

The programme aims to provide practical training in historical research skills, enabling you to carry out a major independent work of original historical research in a dissertation based on a wide range of primary sources, both edited and archival, and an extensive historiography. You will engage with different historical methodologies and historiographical approaches, such as memory, gender and the cultural 'turn', and reflect on their utility both generally and specifically regarding your dissertation. You will be encouraged to develop your own research interests and pursue specialised history modules that allow you to develop and extend these; you will also have the opportunity to do courses outside of History, such as in Modern Languages, which enhance your historical research skills and can be applied to the dissertation. You will also examine the different ways in which history is communicated to both academic and public audiences and learn to critically assess the value of and skills involved in these. A distinctive feature of the MA is its module on Public History, which focuses on the delivery of

history to the public through museums, the heritage industry and schools, and makes the MA not only a solid training for those intending to pursue a PhD and academic career in History but also those considering other History-related careers.

Your contact hours will vary depending on your module/option choices. Full information about contact hours is provided in individual module profiles.

### Learning and teaching

A range of activities are employed across the course, varying in style and approach between the core modules, option modules, Public History module and dissertation. They include practical exercises, tutor-led and student-led seminars and tutorials, study visits, talks given by visiting experts, and dissertation supervision. The completion of the core module will develop your understanding of the questions currently animating history as an academic discipline, the research for the option module essays will deepen your understanding of a specific period or region and/or allow you to explore new avenues of historical inquiry, and the preparation of your public history portfolio will allow you to understand the permeable boundary between academic and other ways in which history is produced. These activities will help prepare you for your dissertation research and writing. Your research skills can be further broadened by the option to take one or two modules outside of History, notably in a foreign language, which could make accessible historiography and primary sources critical to your dissertation. Taken together, these activities will progressively increase your confidence, both written and spoken, deepen understanding and develop independent learning, research and project-management skills.

### Assessment

All postgraduate modules in the MA History are assessed by essay, apart from the core Research Skills and Historiography and Public History modules, where assessment is based on a portfolio of skills exercises, including a seminar critique, book review, dissertation proposal and a multi-pronged evaluation of an institution of your own choice delivering history to a popular audience. Assessed essays test your ability to interpret and engage critically with difficult sources – which need not be exclusively written sources, but which will include material culture, art, artefacts, landscape and the built environment, where appropriate. They assess your ability to synthesize such material and to deploy such evidence in support of a cogent argument. The Public History portfolio requires you to apply your interpretation skills as a historian to your experience as a visitor, demonstrating your alertness to the pressures faced by museums and other public history sites. The dissertation tests your ability to manage a project independently and to construct an extended argument based on your own original research, including the investigation of unedited archival and manuscript material where appropriate.

**Please note:** As a research-led University, we undertake a continuous review of our programmes to ensure quality enhancement and to manage our resources. As a result, this programme may be revised during a student's period of registration; however, any revision will be balanced against the requirement that the student should receive the educational service expected. Please read our [Disclaimer](#) to see why, when and how changes may be made to a student's programme.

Programmes and major changes to programmes are approved through the University's [programme validation process](#) which is described in the University's [Quality handbook](#).

## Educational Aims of the Programme

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The aims of the programme are to:

- provide you with an understanding of the historical development of societies.
- enable you to identify through original research and to engage critically with a range of primary sources especially as preparation for the research dissertation.
- encourage you to engage with and contribute to historiographical debates and to discussion of a range of key concepts, identifying analogies and connections between different periods and regions that integrate our understanding of the past and help you contextualise your own original research.
- help you develop the necessary subject-skills to undertake and write up original historical research, particularly as preparation for doctoral study
- encourage you to develop the ability to learn and research independently and to remain attentive to new

approaches, genres of sources and methodologies.

· Develop an understanding of how history is communicated to and received by the general public outside academe and thereby enhance your employability in history-related non-academic careers

## Programme Learning Outcomes

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Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

### Knowledge and Understanding

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On successful completion of this programme you will have knowledge and understanding of:

- A1. the practices through which historians develop their understanding of the past, individually and as part of a collective project, and their particular application to your own research project;
- A2. historical development within a specific period or geographical region, as reflects your selected pathway and/or module choices, and how your own original research fits into this broader context;
- A3. the conceptual vocabulary and frameworks which allow historians to conceive of change, assess its nature and discuss its wider import with others;
- A4. how to undertake independent research with appropriate supervision.

### Teaching and Learning Methods

A range of activities are employed across the course, and vary in style and approach between the core modules, option modules, and dissertation.

The Core module in Research Skills and Dissertation Preparation uses practical exercises, tutor-led seminars and study visits to provide the research and historiographical skills necessary to make the most of the option modules and dissertation. In addition they serve to familiarise those of you who may be coming to History from a cognate discipline, or returning to the discipline after a break in your studies.

Option modules employ activities such as seminars and tutorials that are regularly student-led, and based on independent research. Research for the option module essays in turn serves to prepare you for the dissertation. With four opportunities to select from a wide range of such modules you have the opportunity to deepen your understanding of a familiar period or region and/or to explore new avenues for historical inquiry. As an alternative to one or two option modules you can choose, in consultation with the MA convenor, modules outside of History in order to enhance your research skills, notably a foreign language that will make accessible historiography and primary sources critical to your dissertation.

In addition to catering to a variety of learning styles these activities progressively increase confidence, deepen understanding and develop independent learning, research and project-management skills.

These skills enable you to make the most of the considerable expertise of members of staff, and you may have the opportunity to participate directly in cutting-edge research projects.

### Assessment Methods

Assessment procedures play a central role in the teaching and learning process. They are designed to assess your knowledge and understanding of the material studied, as well as your competence in key and discipline-specific skills. The Discipline and Faculty MA Handbooks contain detailed descriptors for each type of assessment.

All postgraduate modules are assessed by essay, apart from the core Research Skills and Historiography module and the core Public History module, where assessment is based on a portfolio of skills exercises and shorter research-based writings.

**Summative Assessment** – Summative assessment is the assessment which determines whether you pass individual modules and your overall degree result. All modules are subject to summative assessment at the end of the semester in which they are taught. Assessed essays test your ability to interpret and engage critically with difficult sources – which need not be exclusively written sources, but which will include material culture, art, artefacts, landscape and the built environment, where appropriate. They assess your ability to synthesise such material and to deploy such evidence in support of a cogent argument. The dissertation tests your ability to manage a project independently and to construct an extended argument based on your own original research, including the investigation of unedited archival and manuscript material where appropriate.

**Formative Assessment** – Formative assessment allows you to gauge how your learning is progressing in real time. It does not directly affect your overall degree result, or the mark you receive for specific modules. Such formative assessment takes place throughout the curriculum. Informal written and oral feedback on presentations, essays and draft dissertation elements will be constructive and timely.

## **Subject Specific Intellectual and Research Skills**

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On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

- B1. critically evaluate both primary source materials and arguments contained in secondary historical texts;
- B2. develop new hypotheses on the basis of these evaluations;
- B3. articulate, present and defend your hypotheses, and engage constructively with those of your peers;
- B4. describe and explain the way in which the conceptual frameworks of the historical discipline have changed and evolved over time;
- B5. identify, locate and select primary sources, including unedited archival material and manuscripts, necessary to address historical research questions and challenge current historical thinking
- B6. synthesise and integrate the analysis of primary sources and secondary texts into a coherent and original essay or dissertation argument

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

Activities particularly designed to enhance your research and thinking skills include tutor-led and student-led tutorials, class presentations, essays and the dissertation.

### **Assessment Methods**

Essays and dissertations are the principal means used to assess your intellectual skills. Progression is recognised in the assessment scheme, which allows the development and practice of evaluative, descriptive and synthetic skills in the form of 4,000 word essays, through to the sustained application of these skills in the dissertation (15,000 words).

## **Transferable and Generic Skills**

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On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

- C1. identify, locate, select and draw upon a wide range of primary and secondary source materials;

- C2. critically evaluate and integrate both primary sources and the arguments of established authorities;
- C3. communicate complex ideas and arguments in a variety of written formats;
- C4. communicate complex ideas and arguments orally in presentations and in informal discussion;
- C5. demonstrate interpersonal skills in the context of discussion and debate with others;
- C6. demonstrate the capacity for self-directed problem-solving, independent working and autonomous time-management, especially in carrying out an original research project.

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

Your key skills will be developed through tutor-led and student-led tutorial discussion, group and individual presentations, bibliographic training sessions, practical research exercises, study visits, and the research for and writing of essays and dissertations.

### **Assessment Methods**

You will be asked to demonstrate your key skills through practical skills exercises, the writing of essays and a dissertation. Progression is recognised in the assessment scheme, which allows the development of source identification and selection skills, critical and evaluative skills, written communication skills and independent working and time-management skills in the form of 4,000 word essays, through to the sustained application of these skills in the dissertation (maximum of 15,000 words).

## **Programme Structure**

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The programme structure table is below:

Information about pre and co-requisites is included in individual module profiles.

Where optional modules have been specified, the following is an indicative list of available optional modules, which are subject to change each academic year. Please note in some instances modules have limited spaces available.

### **Part I**

The programme may be studied over one year (full-time) or two years (part-time). Core modules include HIST6081 Research Skills and Historiography (studied over two semesters), which focuses on practical training and engagement with historiographical debates and approaches, and HIST6082 Public History, which explores how the past is communicated to non-academic audiences. In addition you can take four out of a wide range of option modules on specialised aspects of the past, comprising political, religious, social and cultural history ranging chronologically from Medieval to Modern and geographically from British and European to US, Asian and colonial history. As an alternative to one option module in each semester, and in consultation with the MA convenor, you can take another module outside History in order to enhance your research skills. This could include taking a double module over two semesters, notably in Modern Languages, as an alternative to one option module in Semester 1 and another in Semester 2. In addition to optional modules, an Individually Negotiated Topic affords you the opportunity to undertake a small research project on a topic of your own devising, in collaboration with a supervisor, with whom you will meet at regular intervals over the course of a semester in a small group, working on methodological, historiographical, and empirical questions that will assist in the completion of the resulting 4,000-word assignment.

The MA as a whole comprises 90 ECTS (180 CATS)\* credits which breaks down as follows:

37.5 ECTS/75 CATS: HIST6092 Dissertation

15 ECTS/30 CATS: HIST6081 Research Skills and Historiography.

7.5 ECTS/15 CATS: HIST6082 Public History

30 ECTS/60 CATS: Four option modules in History (worth 7.5 ECTS/15 CATS each) OR Two option modules in History (15 ECTS/30 CATS) and 15 ECTS/30 CATS in another Humanities discipline (two 7.5 ECTS/15 CATS modules, one in each semester, or one 15 ECTS/30 CATS double module over one academic year).

Students who successfully complete modules worth a total of 52.5 ECTS/105 CATS, but who fail to submit a

dissertation are eligible for a Diploma of the University of Southampton.

\*(ECTS = European Credit Transfer System; CATS = Credit Accumulation & Transfer Scheme).

### Part I Compulsory Modules

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
HIST6082	Public History	7.5	Compulsory

### Part I Core Modules

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
HIST6092	History Dissertation	37.5	Core
HIST6081	Research Skills and Dissertation Preparation	15	Core

### Part I Optional Modules

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
ENGL6130	Approaches to the Long Nineteenth Century (1789-1914)	15	Optional
ENGL6131	Approaches to the Long Twentieth Century (1914-Present)	15	Optional
HIST6128	China in the Cold War	7.5	Optional
HIST6121	Digital Frontiers: Conflict in Cyberspace, 1967 – present	7.5	Optional
HIST6115	English Social and Cultural Life in the Long Eighteenth Century	7.5	Optional
HIST6108	France and the World since 1789	7.5	Optional
HIST6127	German Nationalisms since the Enlightenment	7.5	Optional
HIST6098	Histories of Britain and Empire	7.5	Optional
HIST6087	History Individually Negotiated Topic 1	7.5	Optional
HIST6088	History Individually Negotiated Topic 2	7.5	Optional

HIST6096	Imperialism and Decolonisation	7.5	Optional
HIST6093	Jewish Society and Culture in Eastern Europe	7.5	Optional
CMRC6014	Medieval Political Thought	7.5	Optional
HUMA6015	Narrative Non-Fiction: The Interdisciplinary Art	7.5	Optional
HIST6123	New Approaches to American History	7.5	Optional
HIST6124	Religion and Politics in Henry VIII's England	7.5	Optional
HUMA6017	Remaking Rome	7.5	Optional
HIST6113	The conversion of the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews and Christians	7.5	Optional
HIST6089	The History of the Jews in Babylonia	7.5	Optional
HIST6114	The Medieval World: sources and approaches in pre-modern history	7.5	Optional
HIST6120	The Rise of the Modern Hospital (18th-19th Centuries)	7.5	Optional

## Progression Requirements

The programme follows the University's regulations for [\*\*\*Progression, Determination and Classification of Results : Undergraduate and Integrated Masters Programmes\*\*\*](#) and [\*\*\*Progression, Determination and Classification of Results: Postgraduate Master's Programmes\*\*\*](#) Any exemptions or variations to the University regulations, approved by AQSC are located in [\*\*\*section VI of the University Calendar\*\*\*](#).

## Support for student learning

There are facilities and services to support your learning some of which are accessible to students across the University and some of which will be geared more particularly to students in your particular Faculty or discipline area.

The University provides:

- library resources, including e-books, on-line journals and databases, which are comprehensive and up-to-date; together with assistance from Library staff to enable you to make the best use of these resources
- high speed access to online electronic learning resources on the Internet from dedicated PC Workstations onsite and from your own devices; laptops, smartphones and tablet PCs via the Eduroam wireless network. There is a wide range of application software available from the Student Public Workstations.
- computer accounts which will connect you to a number of learning technologies for example, the Blackboard virtual learning environment (which facilitates online learning and access to specific learning resources)
- standard ICT tools such as Email, secure filestore and calendars.
- access to key information through the MySouthampton Student Mobile Portal which delivers timetables, Module information, Locations, Tutor details, Library account, bus timetables etc. while you are on the move.

- IT support through a comprehensive website, telephone and online ticketed support and a dedicated helpdesk in the Hartley Library.
- Enabling Services offering support services and resources via a triage model to access crisis management, mental health support and counselling. Support includes daily Drop In at Highfield campus at 13.00 – 15.00 (Monday, Wednesday and Friday out of term-time) or via on-line chat on weekdays from 14.00 – 16.00. Arrangements can also be made for meetings via Skype.
- assessment and support (including specialist IT support) facilities if you have a disability, long term health problem or Specific Learning Difficulty (e.g. dyslexia).
- the Student Services Centre (SSC) to assist you with a range of general enquiries including financial matters, accommodation, exams, graduation, student visas, ID cards
- Career and Employability services, advising on job search, applications, interviews, paid work, volunteering and internship opportunities and getting the most out of your extra-curricular activities alongside your degree programme when writing your CV
- Other support that includes health services (GPs), chaplaincy (for all faiths) and 'out of hours' support for students in Halls and in the local community, (18.00-08.00)
- A Centre for Language Study, providing assistance in the development of English language and study skills for non-native speakers.

The Students' Union provides

- an academic student representation system, consisting of Course Representatives, Academic Presidents, Faculty Officers and the Vice-President Education; SUSU provides training and support for all these representatives, whose role is to represent students' views to the University.
- opportunities for extracurricular activities and volunteering
- an Advice Centre offering free and confidential advice including support if you need to make an academic appeal
- Support for student peer-to-peer groups, such as Nightline.

There are facilities and services to support your learning some of which are accessible to students across the University and some of which will be geared more particularly to students in your particular Faculty or discipline area.

## Methods for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning

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You will have the opportunity to have your say on the quality of the programme in the following ways:

- Completing student evaluation questionnaires for each module of the programme.
- Acting as a student representative on various committees, e.g. Staff/Student Liaison Committees, School Programmes Committee OR providing comments to your student representative to feedback on your behalf.
- Serving as a student representative on Faculty Scrutiny Groups for programme validation.
- Taking part in programme validation meetings by joining a panel of students to meet with the Faculty Scrutiny Group.

Further details on the University's quality assurance processes are given in the [Quality Handbook](#).

## Career Opportunities

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A Masters degree in history is an excellent preparation for a range of careers. Historians are to be found in all walks of life, including education, journalism, the law, the arts and heritage, local, national and international governance, and business and commerce. This is because historians bring to their work not only the broad perspectives nurtured by their study of the past, but also exceptional analytical skills and a developed capacity to make sense of large quantities of information: historians are trained to identify key points and issues, and to articulate their ideas clearly in prose and speech. Historians know both how to work independently and in a team, recognising that the most dynamic environments are those where there is a rich exchange of ideas. There is little doubt that of all the subjects in the Humanities and Social Sciences, the importance of history as an academic discipline is most readily recognised by the broader culture.



## External Examiner(s) for the programme

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Name: Dr Richard Gaunt - University of Nottingham

Students must not contact External Examiner(s) directly, and external examiners have been advised to refer any such communications back to the University. Students should raise any general queries about the assessment and examination process for the programme with their Course Representative, for consideration through Staff: Student Liaison Committee in the first instance, and Student representatives on Staff: Student Liaison Committees will have the opportunity to consider external examiners' reports as part of the University's quality assurance process.

External examiners do not have a direct role in determining results for individual students, and students wishing to discuss their own performance in assessment should contact their Personal Academic Tutor in the first instance.

**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 they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information can be found in the programme handbook.

## Appendix 1:

Students are responsible for meeting the cost of essential textbooks, and of producing such essays, assignments, laboratory reports and dissertations as are required to fulfil the academic requirements for each programme of study. In addition to this, students registered for this programme also have to pay for:

### Additional Costs

Type	Details
Computer discs or USB drives	Students are expected to provide their own portable data storage device.
Hardware	It is advisable that students provide their own laptop or personal computer, although shared facilities are available across the University campus.
Laboratory Equipment and Materials	All laboratory equipment and materials are provided.
Printing and Photocopying Costs	Where possible, coursework such as essays, projects and dissertations is likely to be submitted on line. However, there are some items where it is not possible to submit on line and students will be asked to provide a printed copy. A list of the University printing costs can be found here: <a href="http://www.southampton.ac.uk/isolutions/students/printing/">http://www.southampton.ac.uk/isolutions/students/printing/</a>
Software Licenses	All software is provided
Stationery	You will be expected to provide your own day-to-day stationery items, e.g. pens, pencils, notebooks, etc.). Any specialist stationery items will be specified under the Additional Costs tab of the relevant module profile.
Textbooks	Where a module specifies core texts these should generally be available on the reserve list in the library. However due to demand, students may prefer to buy their own copies. These can be purchased from any source.  Some modules suggest reading texts as optional background reading. The library may hold copies of such texts, or alternatively you may wish to purchase your own copies. Although not essential reading, you may benefit from the additional reading materials for the module.

In some cases you'll be able to choose modules (which may have different costs associated with that module) which will change the overall cost of a programme to you. Details of such costs will be listed in the Module Profile. Please also ensure you read the section on additional costs in the University's Fees, Charges and Expenses Regulations in the University Calendar available at [www.calendar.soton.ac.uk](http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk).