



DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES, LITERATURES & CULTURES

APPENDIX TO THE MASTERS BY RESEARCH STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024/25

To be read in conjunction with the [core Masters by Research student handbook](#)

The Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures sits within the School of Humanities, which covers the following disciplines: Classics, English, History and Languages, Literatures and Cultures.

Welcome to your department

Welcome to the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures (LLC), which brings together the five major subject areas of French, German, Hispanic Studies, Italian, and Comparative Literature and Culture, alongside two minor degree programmes, International Film and History of Art and Visual Cultures. The school also hosts the university-wide Liberal Arts programme. LLC staff produce internationally recognised research and offer a wide range of teaching expertise. The department is committed to offering a university education of the very highest quality to its undergraduates and postgraduates alike.

We very much look forward to the year ahead in the knowledge that we have attracted some of the most able students in the country. We warmly welcome the contribution that you will make to our learning community and we are confident that you will enjoy every success in your studies.

A wealth of other information can also be found on our [web pages](#), so be sure to have a look at them and then to check them again every so often. You can also follow us on Twitter to receive regular news from the School: [@LLC_RHUL](#)

Finally, on behalf of all my colleagues in the department, I would like once again to welcome you most warmly to LLC and to wish you the greatest possible success and enjoyment in your studies over the year ahead!

Professor Sarah Wright, Head of Department

The Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures is in the [International Building](#).

Key contacts

Role	Name	Email	Phone	Room
Executive Dean	Professor Giuliana Pieri	G.Pieri@rhul.ac.uk	01784 443234	INTER124
Head of Department	Professor Sarah Wright	sarah.wright@rhul.ac.uk	01784 443241	INTER153
School Director of PGR Education	Professor Andrew Jotischky	Andrew.Jotischky@rhul.ac.uk	01784 443305	INTER 01A
Dept. PGR Lead	Dr Fabrizio De Donno	Fabrizio.DeDonno@rhul.ac.uk	01784 443255	INTER 164
School helpdesk*		Humanities-school@rhul.ac.uk	01784 276882	INTER 149

* For the majority of your non-academic related issues, please contact the Doctoral School. However, for queries about teaching contracts, expenses and study space within the school, please contact the School of Humanities helpdesk.

Staff

[List of staff in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures](#)

Research areas

[Research within the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures](#)

Student committees

The School of Humanities' PGR Staff-Student Action Meeting meets once a term and contributes to the organisation of the PG Colloquium. Please get in touch with the School Director of PGR Education if you would like to join. If you would like to raise an issue to be discussed there, please contact the [Doctoral School](#).

Research Skills Training and Research Expenses

The School of Humanities runs a research skills training programme aimed at equipping PGRs across the School with the skills they need to successfully complete their studies. Students in their First Year are strongly encouraged to attend as many sessions as possible.

Aims of Masters by Research

The degree programme aims to:

- enable students to pursue an independent course of study in Comparative Literatures and Cultures, French, German, Italian or Hispanic Studies at Masters level;
 - widen access to different kinds of students, offer students the chance to pursue a course of studies that fits in with the demands of their work, with their personal aspirations and with the rest of their lives;
 - examine critically current knowledge, and the essential concepts and theories that inform the study of the chosen language;
 - provide the opportunity for advanced study of specialised topics within the chosen language;
 - examine critically current techniques of enquiry and research in the chosen language;
 - provide the opportunity for students who may not have foreign language skills to pursue advanced studies in Comparative Literatures and Cultures by studying texts in translation;
 - foster the ability to learn independently, whether for further research or for personal intellectual development;
 - develop the written and oral presentation skills needed for effective communication of research findings at postgraduate level.
 - The programme is delivered over one year of full-time study (52 weeks) or two years of part-time study (104 weeks).
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Management of Masters by Research

The MA by Research is administered and run by a Programme Director, Dr Fabrizio De Donno, in conjunction with other members of the department. The Programme Director is the person to whom all students with general administrative queries should turn. Other problems should be referred to the student's supervisor or advisor. The Doctoral School should be your port of call for general enquiries.

Supervision

- Registration normally runs from September for 50 weeks (102 weeks part-time).
 - Full-time students normally meet with their supervisor(s) about once every two weeks for 1-1.5 hours during the first two terms. Part-time students normally meet with their supervisor(s) for half this number of meetings over four terms.
 - This strand will consist of up to 28 hours of individual supervision, to be carried out according to the needs of the candidate. Regular meetings will be arranged with the supervisor(s).
 - After the first two terms, phone and e-mail contact may form the supervision time.
 - The department will monitor and take action regarding students who fail to have regular contact with their supervisor, whatever their mode of communication.
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Dissertation

- Your Masters by Research is assessed entirely on the dissertation, which is worth 180 credits.
- It will normally be around 30,000 – 35,000 words in length, although the University maximum is 40,000.
- The dissertation will be submitted within one year of the start date (full-time / within two years for part-time students).