DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

MA CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY (Research)

COURSE HANDBOOK

2018/2019

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

Welcome to the Department of Geography at Royal Holloway, University of London and to the MA Cultural Geography (Research).

This handbook is designed to provide you with detailed information on the MA modules for the academic year 2016-2017. You will find here:

- Structure of the programme and descriptions of each module taught in the MA
- Information about the Department's Social, Cultural and Historical Geography Group and Landscape Surgery
- Details of assessments and marking guidelines
- Marking Criteria for all assessed pieces of work

For general information about the Department and for the rules and regulations governing the MA programme, please read the Departmental Postgraduate Handbook (available online at: https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/geography/currentstudents/home.aspx#tabbedareaC)

Please note it is important that this handbook is your **first part of call** for questions regarding the course, its teaching and assessments. Further questions about the course, about assessments, about hand-ins etc. need to be posted on the course Moodle Page so that all students can see the answers rather than emailed to individual staff.

1.1 The Structure of the Course

The course consists of four 'strands' and 8 modules:

GG5010 and **GG5015**: Contemporary Cultural Geographies
GG5020 and **GG5025**: Methods and Techniques for Cultural Geographies
GG5030, **GG3035** and **GG5036**: Research Training and Cultural Engagement
GG5040: Dissertation

GG5010, GG5015, GG5020 and GG5025 are taught through weekly discussion based seminars and praxis days led by staff members specialist in those areas. GG5030, GG5035 and GG5036 are taught less regularly, but range from brown-bag lunch discussion groups, to workshops and daylong study visits.

All students take GG5010 (first term), GG5015 (second term), GG5020 (first term), GG5025 (second term), GG5030 (all year) and GG5040 (all year).

Students then have the option to take **either** GG5035 **or** GG5036. Students **must take only one**.

1.2   Readings

You are expected to complete readings in advance for each session. The key readings for each session will be identified by module leaders, and they should be read before the relevant session. Links to these readings will be uploaded onto the course's Moodle page at least a week in advance of the sessions. Please note you need to be on the University's VPN in order to access this (which you can access off-campus). Please see:
https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/it/faq/itfaqs/vpn/faqwebvpn.aspx

Apart from the Departmental Library @ Geography (Q173), there is the Emily Wilding Davison Library (mainly science including Geography, Social Sciences, and History). It is expected that dissertation research work will also require use of London's unrivalled library resources. The key libraries of interest are Senate House and the British Library. Advice on other specialist libraries in London can be obtained from dissertation supervisors and the programme director.

1.3   Assessments:

These are detailed under each course later in this handbook. Please **read these carefully**, including the specifics such as word length, as these regulations will be strictly enforced.

Please also note that you must talk to your mentor and the course director about your essays to ensure that your topics do not overlap. If you overlap your topics too closely you will be **penalised in the marking process, or required to redo the work.**

1.3.1 Hand-in Procedures

Depending on the type of work, hand-in procedures vary, so please take careful note.

i)   **GG5010, GG5015, GG5020 and GG5025 draft work:** email to the staff member who you have been talking too, cc'ing in the course director. Extensions of hand-in to be negotiated with the staff member.

ii)   **GG5035:** please see relevant assignment details (Section 4.3.1).

iii)   **5000-word dissertation proposals**: email to the course director

iv)   **For GG5010, GG5015, GG5020, GG5025, GG5030, GG5036** and **GG5040** <u>assessed</u> **pieces of work** [i.e. the two essays, the two workshop reports, the placement essay and the dissertation] the process is more complex:

     a. These hand-ins happen in the school office in the Department of Geography in Egham.

     b. You must submit your work through Turnitin. Turnitin can found on the course Moodle page, and will be made available before the deadline. Please bring your Turnitin receipt with you to hand in.

     c. Please ensure your work is anonymous (i.e. do not put your name anywhere on it) but *do* include your candidate number. Please note your candidate number (7 digits) is different to your student number (which begins 1000xxxxxx).

     d. Please hand in one hard copy and an electronic copy (you can bring a CD or a data stick, which will be returned to you; you cannot email your electronic copy in).

IMPORTANT: dissertations must have two hard copies handed in and one electronic copy.

Any formally summative piece of written work must be handed in this way.

Please see the general course handbook for details on what to do if you are ill, you have to miss classes or you need to discuss an extension to the work. Extensions to deadlines can be given for illness or special circumstances, but these need to be evidenced by medical notes or other documentation and discussed with the course director.
Please note that seeking an extension after the deadline is not appropriate apart from where totally unavoidable due to illness or other circumstances.

1.4   Mentors

Soon after you start on the course you will be allocated a mentor by the course director. The mentor's role is a pastoral and academic one. While individual academic staff with interests in your area should be your first port of call for the relevant pieces of work you develop, for

general issues (e.g. ill health, if you are struggling with the course, or are worried about things) please talk to your mentor. You can also talk to the course director.

All staff have regular weekly office hours on the main Campus in Egham, please check with them for their specific times (they should also be advertised on their office door).

2. The Social Cultural and Historical Geography Research Group (SCHG)

RHUL's Social, Cultural and Historical Geography Research Group (SCHG) is one of the world's largest collectives of staff and post-graduates working on issues of social, cultural and historical geography. As postgraduates you are full members of this group, and play an active part in our research culture.

2.1 Landscape Surgery

Landscape Surgery is a fortnightly post-graduate workshop and seminar series, led largely by PhD students. It is **usually** held every other Tuesday 2-4, Rm. F3, 11 Bedford Square, Bloomsbury London. The timetable, and details of other events can be found on the blog: http://landscapesurgery.wordpress.com as well as on the SCG events page: http://www.rhul.ac.uk/geography/events/scgeventsarchive.aspx

It is expected that students on the MA course will contribute to the blog (for GG5035 blogging is a requirement). This will take the form of blog postings and the production of podcasts during the courses (detailed later in this handbook), but you can also post to the blog about activities that you think would be of interest to the cultural geography community.

2. 2 London Group of Historical Geographers (LGHG)

The London Group of Historical Geographers meets fortnightly on Tuesdays after Landscape Surgery. Since 1981 the group has provided a forum for the discussion of current research in historical geography.

The timetable for this first term is below, up to date information about the events is available from the website, https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/geography/events/lghg.aspx
These seminars are held on Tuesdays (the same Tuesdays as Landscape

Surgery) usually at 5.15pm, and often in the Large Conference Room, Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, University of London, but do check the website for details.

2.3 Passenger Films – 'the car crash of Geography and Cinema'

Passenger Films is a not-for-profit film society, founded and run by PhD students from Royal Holloway, University of London. The group brings relevant topics from cultural geography to London's film-going public. Passenger Films has previously been picked as Time Out's Choice for "Other Cinema", and were the national winners in 2012 and 2013 in the "Best Film Education Programme" category by the British Federation of Film Societies. During your time at RHUL you are welcome not only to come to the events but also to get involved in organizing them. One of the activities available to you is to work with Passenger Films (in GG5035). The website is: https://passengerfilms.wordpress.com/

2.4 The Centre for the GeoHumanities (CGH)

The Royal Holloway Centre for the GeoHumanities is a major initiative linking arts and humanities scholars and practitioners, geographers and the creative, cultural and heritage sectors across RHUL. It showcases and fosters work with an arts and humanities orientation on issues that have a strong geographical resonance, such as space, place, landscape and environment. The SCHG staff are all members of CGH and their work contributes to its output.

CGH focuses in particular on six cross-cutting interdisciplinary themes:

- The Environmental GeoHumanities, encompassing arts and humanities scholarship on environment, nature and environmental change;
- The Creative GeoHumanities, encompassing practice-based arts research engaging themes of place, space, landscape and environment;
- The Historical GeoHumanities, encompassing humanities research on past landscapes, places and spaces, and the making of geographical knowledges;
- The Spatial GeoHumanities, encompassing arts and humanities research on imaginative geographies and the production of space, past and present;
- The Digital GeoHumanities, including the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), geo-coded data and digital mapping within arts and humanities scholarship;

- The Public GeoHumanities, encompassing the place-based and spatial understandings of the cultural, creative and heritage sectors as well as community and participatory work.

The MA in Cultural Geography (Research) course has content which reflects the Centres themes and will, from time-to-time, participate in activities related to the CGH.

3. Timetable 2018/2019
(Also available on Moodle)

Week Starting	Week	Monday	Tuesday	PM	Wednesday	Thursday AM	Thursday PM	Friday
24/09/2018	1				*Welcome Week (see departmental Calender for this week's activities)*			
01/10/2018	2		11am - 1pm (BS1-01) Introduction to Cultural Geography (OM)				4pm - 6pm (Q136) Introduction to Social Science Research	
08/10/2018	3		11am - 1pm (BS1-01) Place (PC)			12pm - 2pm (GVML) Advanced Library Training (Emma Burnett)	4pm - 6pm (Q136) Interviews (Mike Dolton)	
15/10/2018	4		11am - 1pm (BS1-01) Space (PC)	LS & LGH	Visit to Walthamstow (approx. 11am - 3pm)	11am - 1pm (Q136) Cultural Engagement - an Introduction	4pm - 6pm (Q136) Mapping (Gwilym Eades)	
22/10/2018	5		11am - 1pm (BS1-01) Geohumanities (Giada Peterle/ fac. SE)				4pm - 6pm (Q136) Focus Groups (SN)	
29/10/2018	6		11am - 1pm (BS1-01) Aerogeography (SE)	LS & LGH		11am - 1pm (GVML) Social Media for an Academic (IK)	4pm - 6pm (Q136) Ethnography: Introduction (AS)	
05/11/2018	7		11am - 1pm (BS1-01) Time (IK)		Practicing Historical Geography Conference		4pm - 6pm (Q136) Ethnography: Showcase (PhD showcase)	
12/11/2018	8	Visit to BFI (11am - 1pm)	11am - 1pm (BS1-01) Mapping (FD)	LS & LGH		10.30am - 3pm (GVML) Video and VR Workshop (Will Chamberlain)	4pm - 6pm (Q136) Archives (RS)	
19/11/2018	9		11am - 1pm (BS1-01) Collecting (FD)			11am - 1pm (GVML) Passenger Films: An Introduction (AC)	4pm - 6pm (Q136) Participatory Methods (JM)	
26/11/2018	10		11am - 1pm (BS1-01) Migration (Etienne Piguet/fac. VDD)	LS & LGH			4pm - 6pm (Q136) Digital Methods (ED)	
03/12/2018	11		11am - 1pm (BS1-01) Landscape (VDD)				4pm - 6pm (Q136) Drones & Ariel Imaging (AJ)	
10/12/2018	12		11am - 1pm (BS1-01) Nature (AC)	LS & LGH	Draft versions of GG5010 essay)		Presentation Session	
	13							
	14							
	15				Christmas Vacation			
	16							
14/01/2019	17				11am - 1pm (Q171) Introduction (OM)		4pm - 6pm (Q168) Key Issues & Future Directions in Methods (OM)	
21/01/2019	18			LGH G	11am - 1pm (Q171) Material: Approaching Things (PC)		4pm - 6pm (Q168) Digital Geographies (VDD)	Urban Voices' Day at Rich Mix
28/01/2019	19				11am - 1pm (Q171) Material: Consuming Things (PC)		4pm - 6pm (Q168) Writing Cultural Geographies (VDD)	
04/02/2019	20	MONDAY Science Musuem (12pm - 4pm) Curation of Objects (Oliver Carpenter)		LGH G	11am - 1pm (Q171) Degrowth (CSO)	2000 word dissertation Proposal	4pm - 6pm (Q168) Archives 1: Negotiating the Archive (IK)	
11/02/2019	21				11am - 1pm (Q171) Knowledge: Routes to Knowledge (IK)		4pm - 6pm (Q168) Archives 2: Practicing the Archive (IK)	
18/02/2019	22			LGH G	11am - 1pm (Q171) Knowledge: Venues of Display (IK)	c. 11 - 4pm Cultural Archaeology as Method (James Dixon)		
25/02/2019	23				11am - 1pm (Q171) The Body: Corporeal Geographies (SN)		4pm - 6pm (Q168) Creative Geographies (SE)	
04/03/2019	24	BLOG POSTS/ VIDEO/PODCAST (GG5035) PLACEMENT ESSAY (GG5036)		LGH G	11am - 1pm (Q171) Artful Geographies: Dialogues (SE)	c. 9.30am - 5.30pm (Q168) Creative Geographies Praxis Day (SE)		
11/03/2019	25		Draft versions of GG5020 essay		11am - 1pm (Q171) Urban: Activism & Subversion (OM)		4pm - 6pm (Q168) Performance: Cultural Geographies (SN)	
18/03/2019	26			LGH G	11am - 1pm (Q171) Urban: Cultural Representations (OM)	Central London (c. 11am - 3pm) Innovate Methods Day (OM)		
25/03/2019	27				Staff on 2nd year fieldtrips			
	28							
	29							
	30				Easter Vacation			
	31							
29/04/2019	32							
06/05/2019	33	ALL ESSAYS (GG5010, GG5015, GG5020 & GG5025)		LS		11am - 1pm Dissertation Preparation Session (OM)		
13/05/2019	34							
20/05/2019	35	DISSERTATION SYMPOSIUM (10am - 1pm)		LS				
27/05/2019	36							
03/06/2019	37			LS				
10/06/2019	38						5000 word dissetation propdoal	
17/06/2019					Summer Vacation			
09/09/2019		DISSERTATION						

TERM ONE (weeks 1–16), TERM TWO (weeks 17–27), TERM THREE (weeks 32–38)

Legend:
- GG5010
- GG5015
- GG5020
- GG5025
- GG5030/5/6
- GG5040
- Landscape Surgery & LGHG (LS & LGHG)
- Assessment Hand in
- Draft Deadlines (approx)

4. Module Structures and Information

4.1 Contemporary Cultural Geographies

GG5010: Key Ideas in Cultural Geography (Term 1)
GG5015: Approaches to Contemporary Cultural Geography (Term 2)

GG5010 (Oct-Dec, Term 1) Tuesdays, 11am – 1 pm, room BS1-01 (Bedford Square Campus, Central London).

GG5015: (Jan- April, Term 2) Wednesdays, 11am – 1 pm, room QB171 Queens Building, Egham Campus

These modules consist of a series of seminars on ideas and approaches in contemporary Cultural Geography. They comprise two-hour discussion seminars, most running weekly through the first and second terms.

Please also see Moodle for further details of the course where all the sessions are detailed further and links to the readings are pasted.

For details on this assessment and on the module aims and learning outcomes please see the course specification document online at http://www.rhul.ac.uk/coursecatalogue/home.aspx

4.1.1. Assessment

Code	Assessment	Limit	Weight
GG5010	Essay 1	5000 words	20 credits
GG5015	Essay 2	5000 words	20 credits

In consultation with staff, students produce **two essays** (one essay for GG5010, and one for GG5015 - up to **5,000** words for each) addressing selected ideas and approaches in contemporary Cultural Geography.

Topics: The choice of topics for your work is up to you, but you should consult with staff members who are specialist in the area, and also with your mentor or the course director, to help devise your titles and ensure that you have a good breadth of topics of study. You **MUST** be careful that your topics **do not overlap** thematically with themselves of the work for GG5020 and GG5025.

Draft Process: As part of this process we offer you the chance to write drafts of **ONE of your essays.** It will be read and commented upon by a

staff member who you have chosen to work with closely on your essay. After you have handed in the draft they will send you comments, and you can request a meeting if you want to discuss your work. Please only submit full essays (with references) to be read, bullet pointed texts are not appropriate. The suggested deadline for the draft essay is **12th December 2018**. This is only an advisory dates however; you **MUST** agree a date with the member of staff who is agreeing to look at the draft.

Format: What you write is up to you, but you might want to model your essays on academic book review forums (see examples in *Cultural Geography* or *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*) or on papers in *Progress in Human Geography* (i.e. reviews of a particular field of study/ topic, and the identification of a way forward). Previous topics have included play, laughter, night time economies, geographies of art and environment, geographies of music, film, and politics and the internet.

4.1.2 Deadline

The deadline for ALL essays for GG5010, GG5015, GG5020 and GG5025) is the **7th May 2019 at 4pm**. Please follow the guidelines for hand-in in section 1.3.1.

4.2 Methods and Techniques in Cultural Geography

GG5020: Research Techniques for Social Scientists (Term 1)
GG5025: Contemporary Methods for Cultural Geography (Term 2)

GG5020 (Oct-Dec, Term 1) Thursdays, 4pm – 6pm, Q136, Egham Campus.

NB: This module is run jointly with other Masters programmes in the Department, so will be a larger class.

GG5025: (Jan- April, Term 2) Thursdays, 4pm – 6pm, Q168, Egham Campus.

4.2.1 Assessment:

Code	Assessment	Limit	Weight
GG5020	Workshop Report 1	5000 words	20 credits
GG5025	Workshop Report 2	5000 words	20 credits

For these courses you will write two **workshop reports** (one essay for GG5020, and one for GG5025 - up to **5,000** words for each)

Please note you **MUST** be careful that your two workshop reports are on different topics and also that they do not overlap thematically with themselves or the work for GG5010 and GG5015 essays. If in doubt, please speak to your mentor or Dr Oli Mould as course director.

Topics: You should select a method/methodological issue that interests you and in consultation with the course director you should approach staff members with the appropriate research specialisms to help shape your titles and devise your work.

Draft Process: As part of this process we offer you the chance to write drafts of **ONE of your essays.** It will be will be commented upon by staff members. They will be in contact with you to arrange a meeting in order to discuss your work when it is marked. Please only submit properly written pieces to be read, bullet pointed texts are not appropriate, references should be in full and they should be properly spell-checked etc. The suggested deadline for the draft essay is **12th March 2019**. Again, this is only an advisory dates however; you **MUST** agree a date with the member of staff who is agreeing to look at the draft.

Format: These are workshop reports, which whilst taking the format of essays, are a little different to those in GG5010 and GG5015, the reason being that methods and techniques are best learned by actually trying them out.

For the workshop reports, students are asked to plan and conduct a specific, short piece of research on suggested topics, using a particular method. **It is designed to get you to think about how you might innovate, tweak or reapply an existing method**. Students should read the academic literature on the specific methods and consider their use in Cultural Geography research. Since the focus of workshop reports is on methodological considerations, students are not expected to offer an in-depth literature review on the research subject, though a basic introduction, including framing definitions and clear research questions will be necessary. They then need to plan, conduct, document and write up a piece of primary research that practically applies this specific method. The workshop report should discuss the methodological literature, state the research question and clearly report on the research conducted and its results. Information on choice of sample, setting, positionality, ethics, documentation and data analysis should all be included. Most importantly, students should connect the practical application with the theoretical literature and critically reflect on their own practice. Reports are marked not only for the execution of the methods, but for the degree of understanding shown of key issues raised in the methodological literature and for evidence of on-going, reflexive practice. For many students this will have been the first time they tried a particular method and so the report is likely to contain reflections on

lessons learned and things they would do differently in future.

4.2.2 Deadline

The deadline for **ALL** pieces of assessed work for GG5010, GG5015, GG5020 and GG5025) is the **7th May 2019 at 4pm**. Please follow the guidelines for hand-in in section 1.3.1.

4.3 Research Training & Cultural Engagement

GG5030: Research Training
GG5035: Social Media Outputs
GG5036: Cultural Engagement Placement

All students complete **GG5030**, and **choose either GG5035 or GG5036**. These courses have different assessments (see Section 4.3.1 below) and have a slightly different timetable (i.e. the final session in Term 2). However in Term 1 and the rest of the timetabled learning in Term 2, **all sessions relating to GG5030/5/6 and are compulsory**.

GG5035 consists of writing social media output (blog posts) individually, and together creating a video & podcast that is academically relevant to the course. GG3056 involves the student seeking out a placement position with a cultural institution that is relevant to their research interests.

The sessions run irregularly but usually take place on Thursday mornings on the Egham campus. Please check the timetable (Section 3) for details.

4.3.1 Assessment

Code	Assessment	Limit	Weight
GG5030	Dissertation Proposal Presentation	c.15 mins	20 credits
GG5035	Blog posts/video/podcast (equally weighted)	4000 words/10 mins/20 mins	20 credits
OR			
GG5036	Placement Reflection	5000 words	20 credits

All students complete the assessment for GG5030. This consists of a 2000 word dissertation proposal which is formally marked and counts for 20 credits of your degree.

The assessment also consists of a **successfully completed dissertation proposal presentation and viva** (see section 4.4.1).

In addition, depending on which option module you take:

- For **GG5035**, the assessment is 4-5 blog posts (a total of c. 4000 words) and an edited video/podcast that are academic in content (such as a video abstract for a book or journal article, and a group discussion on a particular theme). **The blog posts are written individually, but the video/podcast is group work**. There is an **equal weighting** on each of the media (so the blogs are worth half and the video or podcast is worth half).
- There is also a requirement to draw up a '**group contract**' that needs to set out specific tasks for individuals. This is a **formative** piece of work, but **must be passed** to complete the module.
- For **GG5036**, the assessment is a 5000 word reflective essay on the placement. You will be assigned a member of staff as a liaison depending on the placement institution.

Topics: The student should select a topic or placement that interests you and in consultation with the course director you should approach staff members with the appropriate research specialisms to help shape your titles and devise your work.

Draft Process:
For **GG5030**, there is no formative presentation as such, but you are given the opportunity to go through the presentation with your supervisor if you want. There are also formative presentation exercises throughout the course. In the course of your dissertation supervision process, you will be asked to give a **2-page proposal of your dissertation, with an informal deadline of the end of term 2**. This is formative, but will allow your supervisor to give you important feedback on the formulation of the dissertation going through the year.

For **GG5035**, each blog post will be commented on directly online in turn by other students, thereby providing peer-review feedback iteratively. The video/podcast will also be an iterative process with your peers given that it is group work.

For **GG5036**, a draft of the 5000-word essay can be submitted to the relevant member of staff directly with the **deadline at their discretion**, with verbal and written feedback offered.

Format:
For **GG5030**, the dissertation proposal presentation will in a traditional academic symposium format with a you giving a presentation, with time

for questions after.

The format is not prescribed, but you are advised to make sure you have the following information/sections in some format:

- Dissertation Title
- Literature Review
- Research aim(s)
- Research questions
- Potential Methodologies
- Ethical considerations
- Health and Safety considerations
- References

Clearly, the main bulk of the talk will be in the literature review section, but do pay careful consideration to methods, ethics and health and safety. These will be discussed with you by your dissertation supervisor. You will have around **15 minutes** for the presentation so take your time!

For **GG5035**, the blog posts should take a more 'accessible' written format (and are usually between 500 – 1000 words each). Consult other posts on the Landscape Surgery blog for examples. It is also worth checking other outlets – many members of staff have a blog, as do other geography academics (there is a good list on the Landscape Surgery blog website). You are also encouraged to pitch work to other online outlets such as The Conversation, Guardian, OpenDemocracy and other media platforms. It will be up to you to source emails and editor(s) information.

The video should be **no longer than 10 minutes** and be shot and edited yourself/yourselves. You are encouraged to be creative and use a variety of locations or imagery, but the video must contain information on a cultural geography theme (this can be discussed with the course director or other member of academic staff). The podcast should be **no longer than 20 minutes** and be based on a discussion of an academic content of your choosing (this could be a recent module you enjoyed as a group or academic paper/book). Do think creatively about how you develop the idea and present it though, there is reward for innovation.

You will need to draw up a **group contract** for the video and podcast work. This piece of work is formative, but needs to be completed. This is done so as to ensure fairness and equal distribution of work within the group. This is submitted to the course director.

For **GG5036**, the style and format of this essay is not a traditional academic essay, but should contain discussion of the relevant

academic issues and concepts related to your placement (e.g. if the placement was conducted at Kew Gardens, then a section of the geographies of museum collections will be important). The essay should also contain information on your role and any projects you worked on (ensuring you do not break any confidentiality that the institution imposed). It should also contain any relevant evidence from the placement (e.g. photos, email exchanges, diary entries etc.). If necessary, it should be signed off by the relevant individual at the institution where the placement took place.

There is a separate document that further details GG5035 and GG5036 that will be circulated later in the year.

4.3.2 Deadlines

For **GG5030**, the **Dissertation Symposium** is slated for the **21st May 2019**. But this is subject to change; the course director will keep you informed as to any changes though as and when they occur.

For **GG5035**, the deadline for all completed blog posts is **5th March 2019, 4pm**. As they will be completed during the year and written online, there is no formal hand-in procedure, but the blog posts & video must all be online by this time. You must email the course director by 4pm on the deadline to give the links to the content.

NB: If this email is not received by then, it will go down as a late submission, even if they have been posted online by then.

For **GG5036**, the deadline for all completed blog posts is **5th March 2019, 4pm**. Please see the hand-in procedures in Section 1.3.1.

4.3.3. Departmental and College Careers Advice

There will be departmental employability events throughout the year that you should attend (these will be advertised separately).

The University also offers a number of sessions on CV production and career surgeries, again, these will be advertised to you.

There will also be additional social media skills training offered by the university that you can attend if you wish (e.g. writing for blogs, Twitter and Linkedin).

4.4 Dissertation

Code	Assessment	Limit	Weight
GG5040	Dissertation	15000 words	60 credits

The aim of GG5040 is to produce a substantive (**15,000 word**) written thesis based upon individual research in Cultural Geography. The precise topic, research methodology and objectives of the dissertation (including preparation of the dissertation proposal in the second term) are developed in discussion with the student's advisor, and there is a formative piece of work in the form of a substantial extract (**5,000 words**) This is not a formal piece of work and is not required to pass, but it is important as you will receive feedback on it from staff (see below for details). The deadline for this is to be agreed with your dissertation supervisor. As this may be over the summer vacation, make sure you organise this in good time. Regular meetings and communication with your supervisor will be crucial in this.

4.4.1 Year Schedule

First Term
Students consider topics for possible dissertations and discuss these with appropriate members of staff. By the end of term, you will have been assigned a dissertation supervisor.

Second Term
It is up to you to organise **fortnightly meetings** with your individual advisor for the preparation of dissertation proposal. It is up to you to make contact with your supervisor to arrange these.

End of term: informal deadline for submission of outline dissertation topic (two sides of A4 max, specifying title and a short paragraph on topic that might detail aims, possible methodology, and sources to be examined) and name of preferred advisor. E-Mail this to the Programme Director, Oli Mould (oli.mould@rhul.ac.uk). This is a formative piece of work so does not count toward your degree, but is an important marker as to your progress.

Third Term
There is a dissertation preparatory session on the **9th May 2019 at 11pm** (location TBC) in which details of how to prepare for the research and the logistical issues will be discussed.

On **21st May 2019** (NB: date subject to change depending on other departmental activities that week) the Programme Director will convene the **Dissertation Symposium**, where you will present your

dissertation proposal for **GG5030** assessment.

After this, later in the third term there will also be a short viva with your supervisor to make sure that you are ready to perform the data collection and write up during the summer vacation. This is an informal process and will be organised between you and your supervisor, but it must be completed. In this meeting, you will need to have completed your **Health and Safety form**, as well as your **ethics**. These are all completed online; please consult the departmental PGT handbook for details.

Summer Vacation:
There is no scheduled contact with advisors during this period, although it is expected that students will consult them as appropriate to discuss progress of their research and writing. During the writing stage, advisors may be asked to comment on research quality, general structure, layout and style of presentation. Detailed editorial commentary is restricted to one draft chapter (to a **maximum of 5000 words**).

The dissertation should normally be typed double-spaced on A4 paper. The dissertation must include a title page, an abstract, full contents page, a clear chapter structure, an alphabetical bibliography, and where appropriate, illustrations and appendices. All source material must be clearly identified.

The dissertation should be bound using machines available in the Drawing Office, for which a nominal charge will be made. A **declaration** that the dissertation has been prepared on the basis of the candidate's own work, and that where other source materials have been used this has been acknowledged as well as the word length, should be included after the title page. This declaration will be available on Moodle for you to download, print and sign.

In exception circumstances, students may be required to attend a viva voce examination.

4.4.2 Word Count

The maximum word limit is 15,000 words, (excluding material in tables, text boxes, appendices, bibliography, contents, abstract, figure list, acknowledgements and other front matter). **The precise word-length must be stated at the start.** The dissertation is worth 60 credits of your final degree.

A **suggested** format and word length for the final dissertation is:

Abstract (250 words – not counted in final word count)
Acknowledgements
Introduction (which includes research aims and questions) (1000 words)
Literature Review (4000 words)
Methods and ethics (2500 words)
Analysis chapters (7000 words)
Conclusion (500 words)
Bibliography
Appendices

Please do use this as a guide though. Creativity and innovative structures are rewarded; so if there is a more appropriate way to segment your dissertation do use it.

4.4.3 Deadline

The deadline for the dissertation is **10th September 2019, 4pm**. Please see the hand in guidelines in Section 1.3.1 for details.

Please note that you will also need to fill out a 'dissertation declaration' form and hand that in with your final submission. This form can be found at the end of this handbook.

4.5 Degree programme weighting

The programme totals **180 credits**. The following table details all the work you will do, and how it counts towards your final degree mark (remember that you must take either GG5035 or GG5036).

Code	Assessment	Limit	Credits
GG5010	Essay 1	5000 words	20
GG5015	Essay 2	5000 words	20
GG5020	Workshop Report 1	5000 words	20
GG5025	Workshop Report 2	5000 words	20
GG5030	2-page Research Proposal	1000 words	0
	Dissertation Presentation	c. 15 mins	20
	Dissertation Viva	1 hour	0
GG5035	Blog post(s)	4000 words	20 (33% each)
	Video	10 mins max	
	Podcast	20 mins max	
OR			
GG5036	Placement Reflection	5000 words	20
GG5040	Dissertation	15000 words	60
		TOTAL	**180**

4.6 Summary of Deadlines

The following table gives a summary of all the deadlines. Please also refer to the year timetable in Section 3 for how these fit in with the rest of the activities.

Code	Assessment	Draft	Full	PT deadline
GG5010	Essay 1	12th Dec 2018	7th May 2019	10th Sep 2019
GG5015	Essay 2	--	7th May 2019	10th Sep 2019
GG5020	Workshop Report 1	12th March 2019	7th May 2019	10th Sep 2019
GG5025	Workshop Report 2	--	7th May 2019	10th Sep 2019
GG5030	Research Proposal	--	22nd March 2019	22nd March 2019
	Dissertation Presentation	--	21st May 2019	21st May 2019
	Dissertation Viva	--	Arrange with Supervisor(s)	Arrange with Supervisor(s)
GG5035	Blog post(s)	--	5th March 2019	5th March 2019
	Video/podcast	--	5th March 2019	5th March 2019
GG5036	Placement Reflection	Arrange with Mentor	5th March 2019	5th March 2019
GG5040	Dissertation	Arrange with Supervisor(s)	10th Sep 2019	10th Sep 2020

5. Marking Criteria

Please note, that **non-submission** for any assessed piece of work results in a **mark of zero**.

From September 2018, work submitted for assessment will be graded by using a set of marks with the pattern X2, X5 or X8. This means that a merit piece of work would be awarded 62%, 65% or 68%. This approach, which is called **stepped marking**, has been found to help in better aligning grades with marking criteria and for providing greater clarity to students about the standard of their work and how close they are to lower and upper grade boundaries. For example a 62% represents a low merit, while a 68% indicates a high merit, for marks in the distinction range, the following marks are intended to be allocated 75, 85, 95, rather than using the pattern X2, X5 or X8.

5.2 Criteria for GG5010 and GG5015 Essays

High Distinction	**80+**	Exceptionally deep and critical understanding of the main issues, concepts and underlying principles, demonstrating significant subtlety and sophistication. Pervasive evidence of originality or imaginative insights, making an original contribution to existing literatures. Breadth, internal consistency, organisation and presentation are excellent. Outstanding ability to analyse and synthesise is demonstrated in the selection, interpretation and evaluation of source material.
Distinction	**70-79**	Critical understanding of the main issues, concepts and underlying principles. Evidence of originality or imaginative insights. Breadth, internal consistency, organisation and presentation are very good or excellent. Substantial evidence of ability to analyse and synthesise is demonstrated in the selection, interpretation and evaluation of source material. Work of distinction/high distinction quality will be fluently written, and may show evidence of particular sophistication or originality in composition and style.
Merit	**60-69**	Clear understanding of the main issues, concepts and underlying principles. Breadth, internal consistency, organisation and presentation are good. Source material is carefully selected, interpreted and evaluated. Clear evidence of ability to analyse and synthesise is demonstrated in the selection, interpretation and evaluation of source material. Merit standard work will be fluently written. A merit mark is particularly appropriate where limited sections or aspects of the work

demonstrate distinction-level characteristics.

Pass	**50-59**	The main issues and concepts are discussed coherently, with some demonstration of understanding of key underlying principles. Breadth, internal consistency, organisation and presentation are satisfactory. Interpretation and evaluation of source material is attempted, though not pursued in depth. All work of pass standard and above should be properly referenced, and should include a full, properly formatted bibliography.
Fail	**40-49**	Inadequate or partially erroneous discussion of the main issues and concepts, with no or very limited understanding of underlying principles. Serious weaknesses in scope, coverage, contextual reading, organisation, presentation or style. Inadequate or superficial use of source materials.
Fail (Poor)	**<40**	Wholly inadequate or seriously erroneous discussion of the main issues and concepts, with no understanding of underlying principles. Profound weakness in scope, coverage, contextual reading, organisation, presentation or style. Little or no evidence of engagement with source materials.

5.2 Criteria for GG5020 and GG5025 Workshop Reports

High Distinction   80+   Exceptionally deep and critical understanding of the main methodological issues, concepts and underlying principles. Exceptional practical application of this understanding. Pervasive evidence of originality or imaginative insights in both critical understanding and application. Internal consistency, organisation and presentation are excellent. Professional ethical standards. A workshop report graded at 'high distinction' makes a significant original contribution to existing literatures on research methods and practice.

Distinction   70-79   Critical understanding of the main methodological issues, concepts and underlying principles. Strong practical application of this understanding. Evidence of originality or imaginative insights in both critical understanding and application. Internal consistency, organisation and presentation are excellent or very good. Professional ethical standards. Work of distinction/high distinction quality will be fluently written, and may show evidence of particular sophistication or originality in composition and style.

Merit   60-69   Clear understanding of the main methodological issues, concepts and underlying principles. Good, rigorous practical application of this understanding, demonstrating professional competence. Internal consistency, organisation and presentation are good. Merit standard work will be fluently written. Ethics must be of near professional standard. A merit mark is particularly appropriate where limited sections or aspects of the work demonstrate distinction-level characteristics.

Pass   50-59   Coherent discussion of the main methodological issues and concepts, with some demonstration of understanding of key underlying principles. Evidence of ability to apply this methodological understanding in practice. Internal consistency, organisation and presentation are satisfactory. Ethics should be of a high standard. All work of pass standard and above should be properly referenced, and should include a full, properly formatted bibliography.

Fail   40-49   Inadequate or partially erroneous discussion of the main methodological issues and concepts with no

or very limited understanding of underlying principles. Ethical issues are present. Serious weakness in practical application of methods. Serious weaknesses in scope, coverage, contextual reading, organisation, presentation or style.

Fail (Poor)	**<40**	Wholly inadequate or seriously erroneous discussion of the main methodological issues and concepts with no understanding of underlying principles. Ethical issues are present. No or profoundly weak practical application of methods. Profound weakness in scope, coverage, contextual reading, organisation, presentation or style.

5.3 Criteria for GG5030 Research Proposal

High Distinction   **80+**   Exceptionally deep and critical understanding of the main issues, concepts and underlying principles to be researched, demonstrating significant subtlety and sophistication. Pervasive evidence of originality or imaginative insights in design, making an original contribution to existing literatures. Breadth, internal consistency, organisation and presentation are excellent. Professional level methodological awareness, highly innovate and creative methods detailed. Meticulously detailed and though out ethical connotations and professional health and safety awareness shown.

Distinction   **70-79**   Critical understanding of the main issues, concepts and underlying principles to be researched. Evidence of originality or imaginative insights. Breadth, internal consistency, organisation and presentation are very good or excellent. Substantial evidence of ability to analyse and synthesise is demonstrated in the selection, interpretation and evaluation of source material. Very good level of methodological awareness, with good awareness of methodological literatures. Work of distinction/high distinction quality will be fluently written. Very detailed and though out ethical connotations and very good health and safety awareness shown.

Merit   **60-69**   Clear understanding of the main issues, concepts and underlying principles to be researched. Breadth, internal consistency, organisation and presentation are good. Source material is carefully selected, interpreted and evaluated. Clear evidence of ability to analyse and synthesise is demonstrated in the selection, interpretation and evaluation of source material. Good level of methodological awareness, with awareness of methodological literatures. Merit standard work will be fluently written. Detailed and though out ethical connotations and good health and safety awareness shown. A merit mark is particularly appropriate where limited sections or aspects of the work demonstrate distinction-level characteristics. Well thought out ethical connotations and good health and safety awareness shown.

Pass   **50-59**   The main issues and concepts are discussed coherently, with some demonstration of understanding of key underlying principles to be

researched. Breadth, internal consistency, organisation and presentation are satisfactory. Interpretation and evaluation of source material is attempted, though not pursued in depth. Adequate awareness of methodological issues. All work of pass standard and above should be properly referenced, and should include a full, properly formatted bibliography. Satisfactory ethical connotations and health and safety awareness shown.

Fail	**40-49**	Inadequate or partially erroneous discussion of the main issues and concepts, with no or very limited understanding of underlying principles to be researched. Poor awareness of methodological issues. Serious weaknesses in scope, coverage, contextual reading, organisation, presentation or style. Inadequate or superficial use of source materials. Unsatisfactory ethical connotations and health and safety awareness shown.
Fail (Poor)	**<40**	Wholly inadequate or seriously erroneous discussion of the main issues and concepts, with no understanding of underlying principles to be researched. Profound weakness in scope, coverage, contextual reading, organisation, presentation or style. No awareness of methodological issues. Little or no evidence of engagement with source materials. Unsatisfactory or no ethical connotations and health and safety awareness shown.

5.4 Criteria for GG5035 Blog posts

High Distinction 80+ Exceptionally well written and concisely argued, with professional level journalistic competence. Conveys a deep understanding of the topic in accessible language. Relevant hyperlinks used, with creative use of other media. Blog posts of high distinction will often be in commercial outlets.

Distinction 70-79 Very well written and concisely argued with a very good level of journalistic competence. Conveys a deep understanding of the topic in accessible language. Relevant hyperlinks used, with creative use of other media.

Merit 60-69 Well written and concisely argued with a good level of journalistic competence. Conveys a good understanding of the topic in a non-academic language. Relevant hyperlinks used, with use of other media.

Pass 50-59 Adequately written and not concisely argued, displays only an adequate grasp of journalistic competence. Limited understanding of the. No hyperlinks used, and no use of other media.

Fail 40-49 Poorly written with inaccessible style. Very limited understanding of the topic and no use of hyperlinks and other media.

Fail (Poor) <40 Very poorly written with totally inaccessible style. No understanding of the topic and no use of hyperlinks and other media.

5.5 Criteria for GG5035 Video/Podcast

High Distinction   80+   Exceptionally produced video/podcast that has been edited to a professional standard. Excellent understanding of the academic content that is concisely delivered. Professional and creative use of other media with a very high competence of videography/audio skills.

Distinction   70-79   Very well produced video/podcast that has been edited to an excellent standard. Very good understanding of the academic content that is concisely delivered. Creative use of other media with a high competence of videography/audio skills.

Merit   60-69   Well produced video/podcast that has been edited to a good standard. Good understanding of the academic content that is largely concisely delivered. Creative use of other media with a good competence of videography/audio skills.

Pass   50-59   Video/podcast produced and edited to a satisfactory standard. Limited understanding of the academic content and is not concisely delivered. Limited use of other media with poor competence of videography/audio skills.

Fail   40-49   Video/podcast produced and edited to an unsatisfactory standard. Very limited to no understanding of the academic content and is not concisely delivered. No use of other media with very poor competence of videography/audio skills.

Fail (Poor)   <40   Video/podcast produced and edited to an unsatisfactory standard. No understanding of the academic content and is not concisely delivered. No use of other media with very poor competence of videography/audio skills.

5.6 Criteria for GG5036 Placement Reflection

High Distinction 80+ Exceptionally deep and critical understanding of the main methodological and/or commercial issues, concepts and underlying principles of the placement. Exceptional practical application of this understanding in the workplace demonstrated. Internal consistency, organisation and presentation are excellent. Exceptional self-reflexivity and awareness of positionality. Excellent use of material and data gathered during placement.

Distinction 70-79 Deep and critical understanding of the main methodological and/or commercial issues, concepts and underlying principles of the placement. Excellent practical application of this understanding in the workplace demonstrated. Internal consistency, organisation and presentation are mostly excellent. Very good self-reflexivity and awareness of positionality. Very good use of material and data gathered during placement.

Merit 60-69 Clear understanding of the main methodological and/or commercial issues, concepts and underlying principles of the placement. Good practical application of this understanding in the workplace demonstrated. Good Internal consistency, organisation and presentation. Good self-reflexivity and awareness of positionality. Good use of material and data gathered during placement.

Pass 50-59 Generalised understanding of the main methodological and/or commercial issues, concepts and underlying principles of the placement. Some practical application of this understanding in the workplace demonstrated. Some Internal consistency, organisation and satisfactory presentation. General self-reflexivity and awareness of positionality. Some use of material and data gathered during placement.

Fail 40-49 Inadequate understanding of the main methodological and/or commercial issues, concepts and underlying principles of the placement. Limited to no practical application of this understanding in the workplace demonstrated. Limited to no internal consistency, organisation and inadequate presentation. Limited self-reflexivity and no awareness of positionality. No use of material and data gathered during placement.

Fail (Poor)	**<40**	Wholly inadequate understanding of the main methodological and/or commercial issues, concepts and underlying principles of the placement. No practical application of this understanding in the workplace demonstrated. No internal consistency, organisation and inadequate presentation. No self-reflexivity and no awareness of positionality. No use of material and data gathered during placement.

5.7 Criteria for GG5040 Dissertation

High Distinction   **80+**   Exceptionally deep and critical understanding of the subject area demonstrating significant subtlety and sophistication; exceptional levels of originality in the construction of its main research aims and questions; analysis or interpretation shows exceptional evidence of originality and imaginative insight; substantial independent research conducted at a very high level of professional competence; critical understanding of research design and methodology; coherent structure; in-depth reading; presentation and style are excellent. Ethics must be of professional standards. A dissertation graded at 'high distinction' contains work of publishable quality and makes a significant original contribution to existing literatures.

Distinction   **70-79**   Critical understanding of the subject area; significant evidence of originality in the construction of its main research aims and questions; analysis or interpretation shows sustained evidence of originality or imaginative insights; substantial independent research conducted at a very high level of professional competence; critical understanding of research design and methodology; coherent structure; in-depth reading; excellent or very good presentation. Work of distinction/high distinction quality will be fluently written, and may show evidence of particular sophistication or originality in composition and style. Ethics must be of professional standards. A dissertation graded at distinction should contain some sections of publishable quality.

Merit   **60-69**   Clear understanding of the subject area, with either some originality in the construction of its main research aims, questions and interpretations, or evidence of strong professional implementation of standard approaches; substantial independent research conducted with professional competence; clear understanding of research design and methodology; coherent structure; in-depth reading; presentation is good. Merit standard work will be fluently written. Ethics of high/professional standards. A merit mark is particularly appropriate where limited sections or aspects of the work demonstrate distinction-level characteristics.

Pass   **50-59**   Coherent discussion of the subject area with some demonstration of understanding of underlying principles; clear formulation of main research aims and questions; coherent but limited interpretation / analysis; significant independent research conducted at an adequate level of competence; a clear research design and methodology; evidence of satisfactory reading; satisfactory structure, presentation and style. All work of pass standard and above should be properly referenced, and should include a full,

properly formatted bibliography and should be ethically sound.

Fail	**40-49**	Inadequate or partially erroneous discussion of the subject area; confused or vague research aims and questions; limited interpretation of source material relying on description rather than analysis; limited independent research; ethical issues; serious weaknesses in scope, coverage, contextual reading, organisation, presentation or style.
Fail (Poor)	**<40**	Wholly inadequate or seriously erroneous discussion of the subject area; no evident research aims or questions; no or very limited interpretation of source material; inadequate independent research; ethical flaws; profound weaknesses in scope, coverage, contextual reading, organisation, presentation or style.

ROYAL HOLLOWAY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Department of Geography

MA in Cultural Geography (Research)

DISSERTATION DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this independent dissertation entitled:

....

....

....

has been composed by myself from my own work and that where other source material has been used, this has been acknowledged.

This Dissertation is no more than 15,000 (excluding material in tables, text boxes, appendices, bibliography, contents, abstract, figure list, acknowledgements and other front matter).

Signed   ....

Print Name   ....

Date   ....

On completion of this declaration, it must be handed in separately to the Departmental Office.