



POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT STUDENT HANDBOOK

MA in *Medieval Studies*



2024/2025

Cover image: The poet Charles d'Orléans in the Tower of London, with London Bridge, the customs house, and the city behind. London, British Library, MS Royal 16.F.II, fol. 73r (detail).

Disclaimer

This document was published in September 2024 and was correct at that time. The department* reserves the right to

modify any statement if necessary, make variations to the content or methods of delivery of courses of study, to discontinue courses, or merge or combine courses if such actions are reasonably considered to be necessary by the University. Every effort will be made to keep disruption to a minimum, and to give as much notice as possible.

* Please note, the term 'department' is used to refer to 'departments', 'Centres and Schools'. Students on joint or combined degree courses should check both departmental handbooks.

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1 Introduction to your department

1.1 Welcome

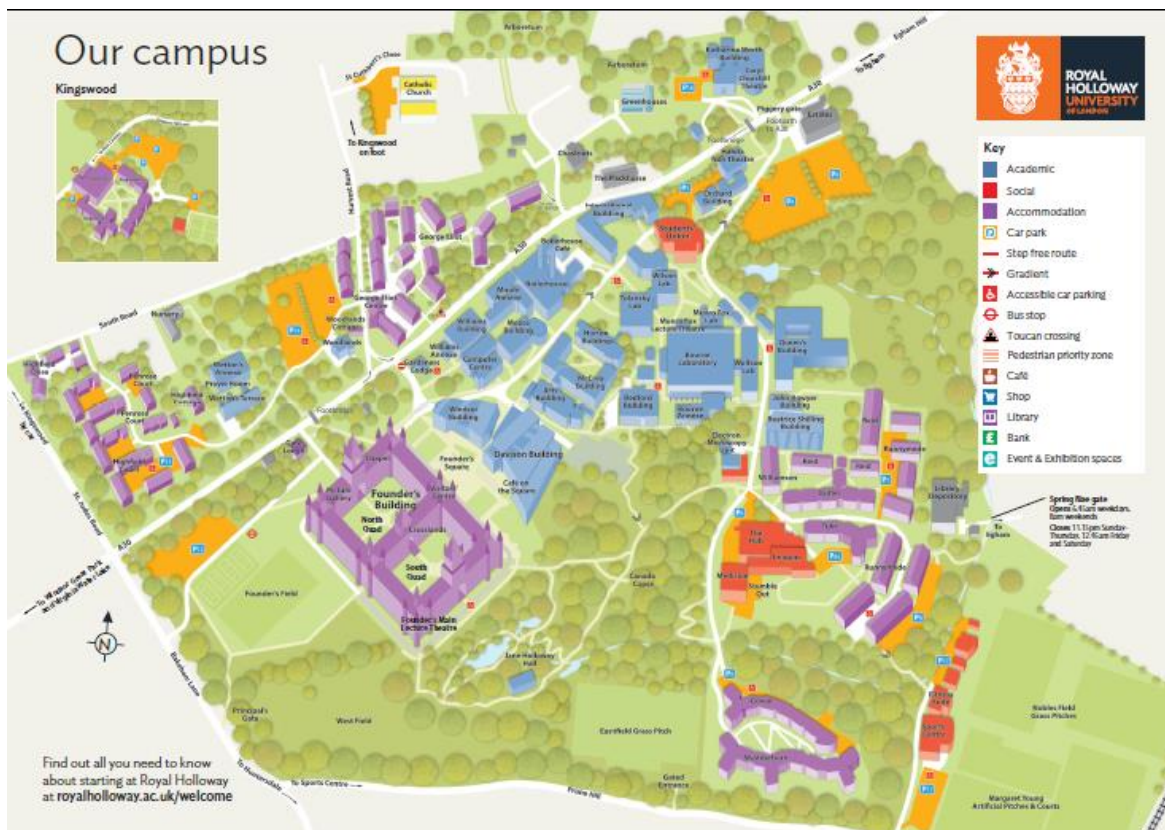
Welcome to Royal Holloway. Royal Holloway, University of London (hereafter 'the University') is one of the UK's leading research-intensive universities, with six academic schools spanning the arts and humanities, social sciences and sciences. The Departments of English and History are both part of the School of Humanities.

The Department of English at Royal Holloway, University of London is innovative, energetic, creative and friendly, with a commitment to excellence and inclusion across our award-winning teaching, writing and research. The History Department is one of the largest and most diverse History departments in the country with over 40 academic and teaching staff whose expertise spans the globe from the ancient world to the present. We are proud to sit within the School of Humanities and their strong team of professional support staff. Whether you are starting your postgraduate studies with us or taking your undergraduate studies to the next level you will join a close-knit community of expert teachers and researchers.

1.2 How to find us: the Departments

The School of Humanities, the Department of English, and the Department of History are all housed in the International Building This can be found on the University [campus map](#) as building 3.

1.3 Map of the Egham campus



Please note: student parking is very limited and is not available if you live in Halls or within 1.5 miles of campus. If you do live more than 1.5 miles away or have a particular reason why you need to come to campus by car, you must apply for a parking permit. If you have a motorbike or scooter you must also register the vehicle with University. Find more information about the Parking Permit portal [here](#).

1.4 How to find us: the staff

Role	Name	Office	Email Address
Executive Dean	Professor Giuliana Pieri	IN 146	g.pieri@rhul.ac.uk
Head of Department (English)	Professor Adam Roberts	IN 202	a.c.roberts@rhul.ac.uk
Head of Department (History)	Dr Robert Priest	IN 044	robert.priest@rhul.ac.uk
School Manager:	Corrie Barker	IN 147	Corrie.Barker@rhul.ac.uk
Student & Programme Administration Manager	Penelope Mullens	IN 149	Penelope.Mullens@rhul.ac.uk
Senior Student & Programme Administration Officer	Paul Gomm	IN 149	Paul.Gomm@rhul.ac.uk
School Office		IN 149	Humanities-school@rhul.ac.uk
Disability & Neurodiversity		FE153 (term- time)	disability@rhul.ac.uk
Information Consultants Emma Burnett Victoria Falconer		Bedford LB2	HumanitiesLibrarians@rhul.ac.uk
PGT Lead for the English Department	Dr Helen Kingstone	IN 251	helen.kingstone@rhul.ac.uk
PGT Lead for the History Department	Dr Patrick Doyle	IN 117	patrick.doyle@rhul.ac.uk
Directors for the MA in Medieval Studies	Professor Jonathan Harris (History)	IN 039	jonathan.harris@rhul.ac.uk
	Dr Jennifer Neville (English)	IN 216	j.neville@rhul.ac.uk

1.5 How to find us: the School office

The School Office is in IN149, which is located to the right when entering the International Building, at the top of the steps leading to the front entrance.

1.6 The Departments: practical information

All English department staff offices are located on the 2nd floor of the International Building. All History department staff offices are located on the ground floor of the International Building. There is a postgraduate study room on the 2nd floor of the International Building, which you are very welcome to use, as well as the study rooms in the library.

1.7 Staff research interests in Medieval Studies

Dr Alastair Bennett. Department of English. Works on late medieval literature and religious culture, with a particular focus on Langland's *Piers Plowman*. (alastair.bennett@rhul.ac.uk)

Professor Kate Cooper, Department of History. Her writing and teaching have charted the world of the Mediterranean in the Roman period, with a special interest in daily life, religion, and the family, and the interconnected problems of martyrdom, resistance movements, and religious violence. (kate.cooper@rhul.ac.uk)

Dr David Gwynn. Department of History. His primary field of research is the Later Roman Empire (AD 200-600), with a particular focus on the reign of Constantine the Great (the first Christian Emperor), the development of Christianity, and the interaction between Christianity and other religions. (david.gwynn@rhul.ac.uk)

Professor Jonathan Harris. Department of History. He has published widely on aspects of Byzantine relations with Western Europe, particularly in the periods of the crusades and the Italian Renaissance, and on the last centuries of the Byzantine empire. (jonathan.harris@rhul.ac.uk)

Professor Andrew Jotischky. Department of History. His research interests centre on medieval religious beliefs, traditions and practices, and on religious institutions in both Europe and the Crusader States of the Middle East. (andrew.jotischky@rhul.ac.uk)

Dr Alison Knight, Department of English. Research interests include the history of the bible, and religious migration in early modern England. (alison.knight@rhul.ac.uk)

Dr Helen McKee, Department of English. She specialises in Old English literature, with particular emphasis on palaeography. (helen.mckee@rhul.ac.uk)

Dr Catherine Nall. Department of English. Works on late medieval literary and manuscript culture, with emphasis on the relationship between war, politics and literature. (catherine.nall@rhul.ac.uk)

Dr David Natal, Department of History. Specialises in the social and religious history of late antiquity and the early middle ages. His digital project 'Connected Clerics' investigates the formation of a 'universal' church in the politically fragmented context of late antiquity. (david.natal@rhul.ac.uk)

Dr Jenny Neville. Department of English. Specialises in Old English literature, especially riddles. She has previously written on the representation of the natural world, seasons, monsters, law codes, and chronicles. (j.neville@rhul.ac.uk)

Dr Carlotta Paltrinieri. Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures. Her research interests lie at the intersection of intellectual history and visual culture. She has worked extensively on artistic literature and art academies between the 14th and 17th centuries in Italy and Europe. (carlotta.paltrinieri@rhul.ac.uk)

Professor Jonathan Phillips. Has written on the diplomatic relations between the Latin Christian settlers in the Levant and Western Europe at the time of the crusades and on the First, second, and Fourth Crusades, as

well as a general history of crusading. (j.p.phillips@rhul.ac.uk)

Dr Rachel Scott. Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures. Researches the literatures and cultures of the Hispanic world and its global contact points from the 13th to the 17th century; interested in questions of reception and cultural translation, the human condition, perceptions of alterity, and ideological uses of the past. Current project traces the reception of a medieval Arabic collection of exemplary fables. (Rachel.Scott@rhul.ac.uk)

Dr Barbara Zipser. Department of History. Specialises in Greek medicine from Antiquity to the late Middle Ages, with an emphasis on textual criticism, manuscript transmission, and the formation of Greek vernacular terminology. (barbara.zipser@rhul.ac.uk)

2 Support and advice

2.1 Support within your School

The School Helpdesk is there to help you with any questions or concerns you might have about your studies. It is situated in the International Building, room IN149. Opening hours are 9:00am-5:00pm. The Helpdesk is staffed throughout these opening hours. You can call in person during opening hours, ring 01784 276882 or email Humanities-school@rhul.ac.uk. Depending on your query, the Helpdesk will answer your questions then and there, put you in touch with a colleague who can help, or find out the answer and get back to you. If you wish, you may also talk to them in private and they will make sure you receive the support you require.

3 Communication

3.1 Post

All post addressed to you in the English and History departments is delivered to the student pigeonholes (alphabetical by surname) in the International Building. At the end of each term student pigeonholes are cleared of accumulated mail which is then destroyed. Important information from Academic Services is often sent by internal post and tutors sometimes return work to you via the pigeonholes so you are advised to check them regularly.

3.2 Personal Tutors

Each student is assigned to a Personal Tutor. Personal Tutors advertise on their office door the times when they are available to see students. Your personal tutor is normally available to see you at the beginning of each term and is also available during their regular weekly **Consultation and Feedback** hours during term time. Arrangements may also be made by them, or by you, to meet at other times. Your Personal Tutor is keen to offer you advice and feedback about your work. Personal Tutors are also willing to discuss personal difficulties, but they are not mental health experts, and they understand that you may prefer to take such matters to the University student counsellors or other Wellbeing services.

Your Personal Tutor will probably be the person best equipped to write you references for jobs during your university career, and to act as a referee for jobs or further education after graduation. It is, therefore, very much in your interest to make sure that you keep in regular contact with your Personal Tutor. Before you name your Personal Tutor as a referee on an application, you should always ask them if this is all right. You should also make sure that you give them ample time to complete any references: while you only have one Personal Tutor, each Personal Tutor has many – past and present – personal tutees.

You should regard your Personal Tutor as your first port of call in the Department for any questions you have, although it may be that on occasions they will direct you to another colleague, either in the Department or elsewhere, or to some other source of guidance or advice, such as the Student Administrative Centre, the Health Centre, the Student Counsellors, or Wellbeing.

Any help you get from any of these sources, or from anyone in the Department, is confidential if you prefer it that way. The Department reserves the right to inform appropriate bodies or persons if it considers that an individual is at significant risk, but you may assume that conversations with staff are confidential unless otherwise stated.

We also advise that students see their Personal Tutor during their 'Consultation and Feedback' hours in the last week of each term.

You may also be asked to see your Personal Tutor if the Department is concerned about your academic progress. In such an event, you will be required to attend this meeting. In particular Personal Tutors hold meetings with individual students for this purpose in January, at the start of the Spring Term, and again in March, at the end of the Spring Term.

3.3 Questionnaires

Your views on all aspects of the educational service we provide are important to us and help us to provide you with the best student experience possible. You are welcome to express views informally at any time to your course tutors, your Student-Staff Committee and student representatives, your Personal Tutor, or the Head of Department.

Modules are evaluated every year. Towards the end of the teaching on a module you will be asked by your tutor to fill in a questionnaire giving your evaluation of the teaching you have received, the effectiveness of library provision and the overall quality of the module. It is University policy that such module evaluations are completed by all students. These are anonymous and your co-operation in making these evaluations is of great help to the Department. The results of the evaluations are considered by the School of Humanities Education Committee as well as the relevant Head of Department, and form part of the Department's Annual Monitoring Report, which aims to improve modules, taking into account student feedback.

All degree programs and modules are reviewed periodically by the School and within the Department, taking into account the student evaluations as well as issues raised at the Student-Staff Committee.

4 Teaching

4.1 Aims of the MA Medieval Studies

- to promote a multidisciplinary understanding of the Middle Ages.
- to provide the skills and knowledge necessary for the study of the Middle Ages, whether for further research or for personal intellectual development.
- to provide advanced study of specialised topics within Medieval Studies.
- to expand and enhance the intellectual community devoted to the study of the Middle Ages.

4.2 Learning outcomes of the MA Medieval Studies

Students who successfully complete this degree will:

- know how to find, organise, deploy, and assess the primary and secondary sources of their research.
- be able to apply specific skills relevant to the study of the Middle Ages.
- comprehend a wide variety of materials and approaches related to the Middle Ages.
- be able to analyse, assess and formulate arguments related to specific medieval topics.
- be able to conduct independent research.

4.3 Teaching weeks and study weeks

At Royal Holloway, welcome week is 'Week 1' of the academic calendar, so teaching starts in 'Week 2'. In each of Terms 1 and 2, there are normally 5 weeks of teaching followed by a study week, then 5 further weeks of teaching. Study Weeks are weeks that do not normally have scheduled teaching (although they can be used as a space to make up any teaching lost earlier in the term to staff illness). They are an opportunity for you to

consolidate what you have learnt, work on your coursework assignments, and do preparatory reading for the second half of the term.

Term One Study Week: 4 to 8 November 2024

Term Two Study Week: 24 to 28 February 2025

The first week of Term 2 is an Assessment Week: there will not be any teaching scheduled, but there will be deadlines for the submission of assessments.

5 Degree structure

Full details about your course, including, amongst others, the aims, learning outcomes to be achieved on completion, modules which make up the course and any course-specific regulations are set out in the course specification available through the [Course Specification Repository](#).

To help you make good progress in your studies at RHUL, we have a simple on-line module (SS1001 'Academic Integrity') which will guide you through preparing your assignments using the best academic standards. You will need to successfully complete this short module, and you can have as many attempts as you like before the deadline to pass it.

5.1 Structure of the MA in Medieval Studies

A full-time student will complete all the elements of the programme in one academic year (fifty weeks). The schedule normally follows this pattern:

Autumn Term:

Core Module (The Research Development Course): 2 hours per week

First Option: 2 hours per week

Academic Integrity: less than 1 hour

[Optional: Latin]

Spring Term:

Programme Module (Medieval Narratives): 2 hours per week

Second Option: 2 hours per week

[Optional: Latin]

Summer Term:

[Examination for Latin]

Dissertation (May to September)

Part-Time Students complete the same elements over two years (102 weeks). They usually take the modules as follows:

Year one:

Core Module (The Research Development Course): 2 hours per week in term 1

Programme Module (Medieval Narratives): 2 hours per week in term 2

Academic Integrity: less than 1 hour

Year two:

Option 1: 2 hours per week in term 1

Option 2: 2 hours per week in term 2

[Optional: Latin]

Dissertation

5.2 Change of course

You may transfer to another programme subject to the following conditions being met before the point of transfer:

- (a) you must satisfy the normal conditions for admission to the new programme;
- (b) you must satisfy the requirements in respect of mandatory courses and progression specified for each stage of the new programme up to the proposed point of entry;
- (c) the transfer must be approved by both the department(s) responsible for teaching the new programme and that for which you are currently registered.
- (d) if you are a student with Tier 4 sponsorship a transfer may not be permitted by Tier 4 Immigration rules.

(e) you may not attend a new programme of study until their transfer request has been approved.

Further information about changing programmes is available in Section 8 of the [Undergraduate Regulations](#)

6 Facilities

6.1 The Library

The Library is housed in the **Emily Wilding Davison Building**. Online electronic resources are also available via the Library's website and via other library collections (e.g. Senate House). Details, including Library Search, dedicated subject guides and opening times can be found online on the [Library home page](#).

The Ground Floor of the Library contains a High Use Collection which includes many of the books assigned for undergraduate modules. The rest of the Library collections are on the upper floors. There are plenty of study areas and bookable rooms to carry out group work, as well as many areas where you can work on your own. The Library contains a large number of PCs and has laptops to borrow on the ground floor to use in other study areas.

The Information Consultants for the School of Humanities are Emma Burnett and Victoria Falconer (HumanitiesLibrarians@rhul.ac.uk)

6.2 Photocopying and printing

The departmental printers and photocopier are reserved for staff use. Copier-printers (MFDs) for students are located in the Library, the Computer Centre and many PC labs, which will allow you to make copies in either black and white or colour. Further information is available [here](#).

6.3 Computing

[How to find an available PC](#)

There are ten open access PC Labs available on campus which you can use, including three in the Computer Centre. For security reasons access to these PC Labs is restricted at night and at weekends by a door entry system operated via your University card.

Many of the PC labs are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, although this may be affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Alternatively, there are computers available for your use in the Library, and Computer Centre, although please do bear in mind that capacity on campus is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future.

7 Assessment information

All work which contributes to the award of the MA in Medieval Studies is assessed by an internal examiner and moderated by another internal examiner; it may also be read by an external examiner. The Examination Sub-Board (which meets in July) considers the marks other than those for the dissertation; a final Examination Sub-Board (in October) considers the marks for the dissertation.

The marking scheme is as follows:

70-100%	Distinction
60-69%	Merit
50-60%	Pass
0-49%	Fail

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%. A 62% represents a low Merit, while a

68% indicates a high Merit. Please see the **Marking Criteria** (below) for further details of the marking scheme.

Feedback on student performance during the programme is provided through instructors' comments on draft essays. Feedback on final essays (summative assessment) is provided electronically through TurnItIn, including comments from the markers and provisional marks. This feedback is made available to students as soon as possible after the provisional marks have been agreed. Provisional marks are subject to confirmation by the Sub-Board of Examiners, which meets in July (for modules) and October (for the dissertation).

To be awarded the degree a student must achieve a mark of at least 50% in each module. Failure marks of between 40 to 49% may, at the discretion of the Examining Board, be condoned in one or more module constituting up to a maximum of 40 credits, but the Dissertation and the Programme Module must be passed with a mark of 50% or more. A student who does not pass a module at the first attempt may be allowed to re-sit on one occasion, according to the discretion of the Examination Board. This attempt must take place at the next available opportunity—usually during Summer Re-sits.

To be awarded a Merit a student must achieve a weighted* average of at least 60% over all modules, with no mark falling below 50%, and normally with a mark of at least 60% in the dissertation. A Merit cannot be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any element of the Programme.

To be awarded a Distinction a student must achieve a weighted* average of at least 70% over all modules, with no mark falling below 50%, and normally with a mark of at least 70% in the dissertation. A Distinction cannot be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any element of the Programme.

* That is, the average must take into account the fact that a 60-credit module counts for twice as much as 30-credit module.

Students can find out whether they have gained a Distinction, Merit, Pass, or Fail after the meeting of the University MA Board, which takes place at the end of the candidate's programme (usually in October or November). Detailed results will then be released to you through Campus Connect. The Graduation ceremony takes place in December. Small prizes are awarded to the students gaining the highest distinctions in History and English modules respectively.

7.1 Anonymous marking and cover sheets

All final essays and other forms of written coursework are marked anonymously. Please remember to make sure that your name does not appear on the written work that you submit. Work should be submitted by CANDIDATE NUMBER ONLY. Your candidate number (which changes every year) will be circulated to you early in Autumn Term.

7.2 Submission of work

As noted above, all work for the final assessment of any course must be submitted anonymously via Turnitin, i.e. identified by CANDIDATE NUMBER, not name or student ID number. Formative work, i.e. essays which are done for practice only and do not contribute to the mark for the course, are also normally submitted anonymously online, but there may be some exceptions (for example in-class language formative tests). If you are unsure whether an assessment is assessed or formative, please check with the course tutor. Please make sure that your name does not appear anywhere in your essay (including headers and footers).

All coursework and dissertations must be submitted electronically. The steps you have to take in order to submit an electronic copy of assessed assignments are described in detail on the Avoiding Plagiarism course which can be accessed through the Moodle Home page on the Moodle site <http://moodle.royalholloway.ac.uk/>. Your work is sent to the Joint Information Services Committee (JISC) Plagiarism Detection Site (PDS) for comparison with the contents of that system's databank, and it is returned to the markers at Royal Holloway annotated to show matching text and its source(s). The purpose of this step is not to detect plagiarism – we do not expect this to occur and would be very disappointed to

discover that it had – but to help the markers to check that you are referencing quoted material appropriately.

All assignments, whether or not they count for assessment, must be submitted by the advertised deadlines, which will be stated on the relevant course Moodle page.

7.3 Penalties for over-length work

Word limits are not set to make students' lives unnecessarily difficult! They exist because of the importance of students developing the necessary skills to produce different kinds of writing under a range of circumstances and for various purposes. Word limits, therefore, need to be taken seriously as any work exceeding them may not be marked. Short-weight work is unlikely to be able to meet the assessment criteria in full.

Work which is longer than the stipulated length in the assessment brief will be penalised in line with Section 13, paragraph (6) of the University's [Postgraduate Taught Regulations](#):

Section 13 (6)

Any work (written, oral presentation, film, performance) may not be marked beyond the upper limit set. The upper limit may be a word limit in the case of written work or a time limit in the case of assessments such as oral work, presentations, films or performance. In the case of presentations, films or performance these may be stopped once they exceed the upper time limit.

In addition to the text, the word count should include quotations and footnotes. Please note that the following are excluded from the word count: candidate number, title, course title, preliminary pages, bibliography and appendices.

7.4 What to do if things go wrong – Extensions to deadlines

Please refer to the Extensions Policy and guidance on the University's webpage about [Applying for an Extension](#).

But please note: Not every assessment is eligible for an extension. Listed below are the assessments for which extensions cannot be granted (i.e. are exempt):

- Small weekly reading responses
- Essay plans to provide formative feedback
- Individual oral presentations (formative)

7.5 Support and exam access arrangements for students requiring support

Some students at the University may have a physical or mental impairment, chronic medical condition, or a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) which would count as a disability as defined by the Equality Act (2010)—that is, 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. It is for such conditions and SpLDs that our [Disability and Neurodiversity Team](#) (D&N) can put in place adjustments, support and exam access arrangements. Please note that a 'long-term' impairment is one that has lasted or is likely to last for 12 months or more.

If you have a disability or SpLD you must register with the [Disability and Neurodiversity Team](#) for an assessment of your needs. There is a process to apply for special arrangements—these are not automatically put in place. Disability and Dyslexia Services can discuss this process with you when you register with them. More information about registering with the Disability and Neurodiversity team [is available here](#).

Please note that if reasonable adjustments have been put in place for you during the academic year, the Sub-board will not make further allowance in relation to your disability or SpLD.

7.6 Academic misconduct - Plagiarism

The University regulations on academic misconduct (also known as assessment offences) can be found on the [Attendance and Academic Regulations page](#) of the student intranet.

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to plagiarism (see below), commissioning, duplication of work (that is, submitting work for assessment which has already been submitted for assessment for the same or another course), falsification, impersonation, deception, collusion (for example, group working would constitute collusion where the discipline or the method of assessment emphasises independent study and collective ideas are presented as uniquely those of the individual submitting the work), and failure to comply with the rules governing assessment, including those set out in the 'Instructions to candidates'.

The Regulations set out some of the types of academic misconduct in more detail, the procedures for investigation into allegations of such offences and the penalties. Students are strongly encouraged to read these Regulations and to speak with their Personal Tutors or other members of staff in their department should they have any queries about what constitutes academic misconduct. The University treats academic misconduct very seriously and misunderstanding about what constitutes academic misconduct will not be accepted as an excuse. Similarly, extenuating circumstances cannot excuse academic misconduct.

What is Plagiarism?

'Plagiarism' means the presentation of another person's work in any quantity without adequately identifying it and citing its source in a way which is consistent with good scholarly practice in the discipline and commensurate with the level of professional conduct expected from the student. The source which is plagiarised may take any form (including words, graphs and images, musical texts, data, source code, ideas or judgements) and may exist in any published or unpublished medium, including the internet. Plagiarism may occur in any piece of work presented by a student, including examination scripts, although standards for citation of sources may vary dependent on the method of assessment.

Identifying plagiarism is a matter of expert academic judgement, based on a comparison across the student's work and on knowledge of sources, practices and expectations for professional conduct in the discipline. Therefore it is possible to determine that an offence has occurred from an assessment of the student's work alone, without reference to further evidence.

Avoiding Plagiarism

You will successfully avoid plagiarism if you always observe this simple rule. Whenever you quote or summarise the words of a modern author, you should:

- use quotation marks to show the extent of your quotation, and
- name your source clearly each time.

You are strongly advised to participate in the on-line learning resource on Avoiding Plagiarism. Visit the Moodle site, <https://moodle.royalholloway.ac.uk/enrol/index.php?id=1897>, and see **Avoiding Plagiarism** under **My Courses**.

You need to be careful to avoid plagiarising unintentionally. This can happen for example when a student:

- quotes from a source listed in the bibliography at the end of the essay without also referring to it in the appropriate places in the text or in footnotes;
- quotes directly from a source referred to in footnotes without making it clear, through the use of inverted commas or other devices, where the quotation begins and ends;
- relies on his or her own notes made from a book or article, and inadvertently uses words copied verbatim from a modern author without acknowledgement;
- duplicates his or her own work, for example by submitting almost exactly the same work for two different assignments.

An allegation of plagiarism does not necessarily imply an allegation of intent on the part of the student to cheat. Situations which may, however, imply cheating in this context include:

- the use of sources which would not normally be available to the student, such as work submitted by others in previous years;
- an attempt to dismiss the plagiarism when presented with material evidence;

- collusion with another person;
- a repeat offence.

All cases of alleged plagiarism will be initially referred to the Deputy Chair of the Department Assessment Board who will investigate the matter. If the case is proved, they may impose a penalty from among those set out in the regulations. The most usual penalty is a mark of zero. More serious cases, or repeat offences, may be referred to the Vice-Principal, and the offender may be excluded from further study in the University.

8 Health and Safety Information

The [Health and Safety webpage](#) provides general information about our health and safety policies.

8.1 Code of practice on harassment for students

The University is committed to upholding the dignity of the individual and recognises that harassment can be a source of great stress to an individual. Personal harassment can seriously harm working, learning and social conditions and will be regarded and treated seriously. This could include grounds for disciplinary action, and possibly the termination of registration as a student.

The University's [Code of Practice on personal harassment for students](#) should be read in conjunction with the [Student Disciplinary regulations](#) and the [Complaints procedure](#).

8.2 Lone working policy and procedures

The University has a 'Lone and Out of Hours Working' policy that can be found [here](#).

Lone working is defined as working during either normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace or when working outside of normal hours.

Any health and safety concerns should be brought to the attention of the Departmental Health and Safety Coordinator, Penelope Mullens, or the University Health and Safety Office.

It is likely that most activities will take place on University premises. However, the principles contained in the above section will apply to students undertaking duties off campus.

9. Core Student Handbook

The [University's Core Student Handbook](#) has further information about the following:

- Support and Advice
- Communication
- Teaching
- Attending Classes and Engaging with your Studies
- Degree Structure
- Facilities
- Assessment Information
- Careers information
- Complaints and academic appeals procedure
- Equal opportunities statement and University codes of practice

10. More information about the MA Medieval Studies

10.1 Choice of Style Sheet

Although individual colleges, departments, publications, and scholars may use different style sheets, the most widely accepted referencing style for the Humanities at the University of London is that published by the Modern Humanities Research Association (MHRA). It is therefore recommended that you become familiar with this style sheet and follow its format in all your work on the MA in Medieval Studies.

10.2 Module Descriptions

Term 1 Core Module

The Research Development Course ('The RDC') (HS5217) (Dr Jennifer Neville and Professor Jonathan Harris)

This is a mandatory module taken by all students pursuing the Medieval MA. It has three main aims.

1. This module makes students aware of issues and topics associated with the study of the Middle Ages on a wide and interdisciplinary basis. It especially seeks to counteract the traditional distinctions between literary and historical approaches. Staff members will aim to demonstrate the range of approaches and issues currently under investigation in the field of Medieval Studies.
2. This module trains students in the skills needed to undertake research in the field of Medieval Studies. These skills will vary from year to year (depending, for example, on the availability of staff members), but they will normally include the following types of activity: referencing techniques (footnotes and bibliography), reviewing, finding and dealing with primary sources, and reading non-textual sources. There will also be a sessions on preparing a dissertation.
3. This module provides a venue in which the cohorts from the MA in Medieval Studies and the MA in Crusades Studies may form an intellectual community. Students who might otherwise never meet will have an opportunity to interact with each other and hear the ideas and opinions of those taking modules different from their own.

Term 1 Options

Medieval Literary London (EN5611)

(Dr Alastair Bennett)

The module invites students to read and discuss a wide range of late medieval texts in relation to the city of London. It interrogates the way that London, its inhabitants and its institutions are represented in medieval literature, from the court at Westminster to the pulpit at St Paul's, the 'lewed ermytes' of Cornhill and the inns of Southwark. It considers London as a site of literary composition, home to poets including Langland, Gower and Chaucer, and as a locus of textual production, where many important literary manuscripts were copied and circulated. And it also offers opportunities to think about other medieval cities, real and imagined, in their relation to London. How and why did medieval writers imagine London as a 'new Troy', and how did the realities of this earthly city inform their thinking about the heavenly city, New Jerusalem? The reading for this module includes some of the very best late medieval literature and a number of rich and interesting lesser-known texts. Students will read selections from Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Canterbury Tales*, Langland's *Piers Plowman*, Gower's *Vox Clamantis* and *Confessio Amantis*, Hoccleve's *Complaint and Dialogue* and Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes*, amongst others. We will read Middle English texts in glossed editions, and Latin texts in modern English translations.

Introductory Reading:

Caroline Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages: Government and People, 1200-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)

Hanna, Ralph, *London Literature, 1300-1380* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

Jonathan Hsy, 'City', in *A Handbook of Middle English Studies*, ed. Marion Turner (Oxford: Blackwell, 2013), pp. 315-29

Sheila Lindenbaum, 'London texts and Literate Practice', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. David Wallace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 284-309

Linne R. Mooney and Estelle Stubbs, *Scribes and the City: London Guildhall Clerks and the Dissemination of Middle English Literature, 1375-1425* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2013)

Marion Turner, *Chaucerian Conflict: Languages of Antagonism in Late Fourteenth-century London* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2007)

Pilgrimage in the Medieval World (HS5517)

(Professor Andrew Jotischky)

The aims of the module are to develop an understanding of the significance of pilgrimage in the medieval world through a combination of contextual study of the ideals and practices associated with this dimension of medieval piety, and specific study of contemporary pilgrimage accounts from the fourth to fifteenth centuries. Students should thereby be able to consider specific aspects of pilgrimage and the practices associated with it within a broad context of changing practices of piety. They should appreciate the value of interdisciplinary approaches to the understanding of medieval texts, and comparative approaches to medieval religious history. The content will be based on study of a number of pre-selected contemporary pilgrimage accounts from Latin and Byzantine sources, in translation. Typical topics will include: the practice of pilgrimage in religious traditions from Late Antiquity onwards, Saints' cults and sacred space, specific pilgrimage destinations, pilgrims' writings, gender, class, material culture, etc.

Introductory Reading:

Dietz, Maribel. *Wandering Monks, Virgins and Pilgrims: Ascetic Travel in the Mediterranean World 300-800* (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2005)

Eade, John and Michael Salnow (ed) *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage* (London: Routledge, 1991)

Kofsky, Aryeh and Guy C. Stroumsa (eds) *Sharing the Sacred. Religious Contacts and Conflicts in the Holy Land, First to Fifteenth Centuries CE* (Jerusalem: YadIzhak Ben Zvi, 1998)

Sumption, Jonathan. *Pilgrimage. An Image of Medieval Religion* (London: Faber, 1975)

Turner, Victor and Edith. *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (New York: Columbia UP, 1995).

Van Herwaarden, J. 'Pilgrimage and Social Prestige: Some Reflections on a Theme', in *Wahlfahrt und Alltag in Mittelalter und fruher Neuzezeit*, ed G. Jaritz and B. Schuh (Vienna, 1992), 27-79

Webb, Diana. *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in the Medieval West* (London : I.B. Tauris, 1999)

Byzantium and the First Crusade (HS5219)

(Professor Jonathan Harris)

This course traces the response of the rulers of the Byzantine Empire to the First Crusade, which passed through their territory in 1096-7. It places the crusade in the context of previous Byzantine interaction with the Latin West, especially attempts by the emperors to secure military help both before and during the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118). The events of the First Crusade - its preaching by Urban II in 1095, its arrival at Constantinople in 1096-7, its progress through Byzantine territory to Antioch, the 'third wave' of 1101 - will all be discussed in this context through a range of Byzantine and Western source material in translation. Among the issues discussed will be the role of Alexios I in the preaching and launching of the crusade, the nature of the oaths sworn in Constantinople in 1097, the importance of the schism between the Byzantine and western Churches and the origin of the hostility between Bohemond and Alexios I.

Introductory Reading:

Anna Komnene (Comnena), *The Alexiad*, trans. E.R.A. Sewter, revised Peter Frankopan (London: Penguin, 2009)

Michael Angold, *The Byzantine Empire, 1025-1204: A Political History*, 2nd edition (London: Longman, 1997)

Peter Frankopan, *The First Crusade: The Call from the East* (London: Bodley Head, 2012)

Jonathan Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 3rd edition (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2022)

Term 2 Programme Module

Medieval Narratives in Cultural Contexts (EN5607)

(Professor Andrew Jotischky and Dr Carlotta Paltrinieri)

This interdisciplinary module explores the traditions, forms, and varieties of medieval storytelling. Texts are chosen from among a wide range of narrative genres, such as epic, chronicle, romance,

fabliau, and tale collections; they may be read either in their original language (Old and Middle English, French, Latin, Greek, or Italian) or in translation, depending upon your previous knowledge of them. The aim of this module is to broaden your knowledge of the range of medieval narratives, to provide you with relevant theoretical approaches so that you can develop the types of analyses that you perform on them, and to encourage an interdisciplinary understanding of medieval writing.

This year, the two texts to be studied are: William of Tyre's *Historia* and Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

Introductory Reading: Primary Sources

Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, trans. by G. H. McWilliam, 2nd edn (London: Penguin, 1995)

William of Tyre, *History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, trans. by Emily Babcott and A. C. Krey (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943) [available as an e-book from the Davison Library]

Introductory Reading: Secondary Sources

Armstrong, G., Daniels, R., & Milner, S., eds, *The Cambridge Companion to Boccaccio* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015)

Blockmans, Wim, and Peter Hoppenbrouwers, *Introduction to Medieval Europe 300-1550* (New York: Routledge, 2007)

Davenport, W. A., *Medieval Narrative: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)

Hastings, R., *Nature and Reason in the Decameron* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1975)

Migiel, Marilyn, *A Rhetoric of the Decameron* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003)

Rosenthal, Joel, *Understanding Medieval Primary Sources: Using Historical Sources to Discover Medieval Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2011)

Rosenwein, Barbara, *A Short History of the Middle Ages*, 5th edn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018)

Wallace, David, ed., *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999)

Wickham, Chris, *Medieval Europe* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017)

Term 2 Options

Women, the Crusades, and the Frontier Societies of Medieval Christendom, 1000 to 1300 (HS5209)

(Professor Andrew Jotischky)

In this module you will develop an understanding of how the crusading movement arose at a time of significant change for women. You will look at the effects of the Gregorian Reform and contemporary societal change on women's traditional roles. You will examine how medieval historians used gendered language and moral tales to express their disapproval of women who took the cross, and the role of women in supporting crusader battles, often becoming the casualties of warfare. You will consider the role of noble women in providing political stability through regency and marriage after the First Crusade in the Latin society established in the East, and the effects of crusading on women who remained in the West.

Introductory Reading:

Barber, Malcolm, *The Crusader States* (New Haven, 2012)

Edgington, Susan and Sarah Lambert (eds) *Gendering the Crusades* (New York, 2002)

Gerish, Deborah, 'Gender theory', in *Palgrave Advances in the Crusades*, ed. Helen Nicholson (Basingstoke, 2005)

Hodgson, Natasha, *Women, Crusading and the Holy Land in Historical Narrative* (Woodbridge, 2007)

Maier, Christoph, 'The roles of women in the crusade movement: a survey', *Journal of Medieval History* 30 (2004), 61-82

The Memory and Legacy of the Crusades (HS5256)

(Professor Jonathan Phillips)

This course will examine the writing and the memory of crusading and the crusades, paying particular

attention to the evolution and mutation of the crusading idea over the last two hundred years. It will focus on three key themes: 1) crusade historiography; 2) Western crusader medievalism; and 3) Islamic memory and use of the crusades. It will enable to begin to answer the question of why the crusades have been an enduring cultural and political touchpoint for so many for so long and highlight the malleability of their memory.

Through the seminars, we will encounter the ways in which crusading imagery was adopted by the European colonial/imperial powers during the nineteenth century and track its use through World War I and II, following the story down to the disastrous use of the word 'crusade' by President George W. Bush in 2001. We will consider how historians have interpreted the subject and have influenced popular perceptions of crusading – not least through interventions in the media. As well as these 'Western' perspectives we will analyse how the crusade and the jihad have evolved in the Muslim world; once more looking at the age of colonialism and imperialism, but this time through Muslim eyes. We will also follow these ideas through the twentieth century and down to the present day, looking at their use by Islamists such as Osama bin Laden and ISIS, and also Arab Nationalists, such as President Nasser of Egypt and President Hafez al-Asad of Syria. The course will employ a range of evidence including visual (films) and literary materials.

Introductory Reading:

Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999).
Jonathan Phillips, *The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin* (London, 2019)
Elizabeth Siberry, 'Images of the Crusades in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', in Jonathan Riley-Smith (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 385-89
Christopher Tyerman, *The Debate on the Crusades, 1099-2010* (Manchester 2011)

Byzantium and the Fourth Crusade (HS5220)

(Professor Jonathan Harris)

This course takes a long-term view of the crusade which captured and sacked Constantinople, the capital city of the Byzantine empire, in April 1204. Starting in around 1192, it places events in the context of relations between the Byzantines and previous crusades, of the internal situation of the empire and of the position in the Latin east in the aftermath of the Third Crusade. It then examines how the Fourth Crusade was preached and planned, how it was diverted first to Zara and then to Constantinople, and how it came to attack and pillage the city. Translations of accounts left by contemporaries and eyewitnesses (both Byzantine and Western) will be studied in detail and subjected to critical analysis.

Introductory Reading:

Michael Angold, *The Byzantine Empire, 1025-1204: A Political History*, 2nd edition (London: Longman, 1997)
Jonathan Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 2nd edition (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2014)
Jonathan Phillips, *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople* (London: Cape, 2004)

Optional Skills Module (terms 1 and 2):

Latin for Research (CL5760)

This module cannot be taken for credit, but students who have not studied Latin before are strongly urged to attend. The aim of the module is to enable students to learn enough Latin to be able to use it for research purposes, especially if they are going on to doctoral work following the MA. Students will be strongly recommended to take a summer follow-up module in Latin to confirm what they have learnt.

By the end of the module students will be able to:

- Read simple texts in classical Latin at a level approaching that of GCSE
- Parse all five declensions and indicative verbs

- Read and understand documents in basic medieval Latin such as wills, deeds and accounts

Suggested Reading:

Hendricks, Rhoda A., *Latin Made Simple* (London: Heinemann, 1982)

Cheney, C. R., ed., *A Handbook of Dates for Students of British History*, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks 4, new edn. rev. by Michael Jones (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)

Stuart, Denis, *Latin for Local and Family Historians: A Beginner's Guide* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2000)

Goode, Eileen A., *Latin for Local History: An Introduction*, 2nd edn (London: Longman, 1978)

10.3 The Dissertation (HS5218)

The dissertation is an independent research project, which results in a piece of original work of 12,000 words. It is usually researched and written in the months following the completion of the other modules on the programme (i.e. from June to September). Part-time students normally complete the dissertation in the second year of their programme, although they are strongly advised to arrange a supervisor and begin their research during their first Summer Term.

It can be daunting to begin such a large project, so we have a session as part of the Research Development Course, to help you to begin thinking about your dissertation and to offer advice.

Suggested Dissertation Schedule

By mid-May	All students should have had initial consultations with supervisors and settled upon a provisional title.
By early June	Students should have seen their supervisors to discuss a detailed plan of chapters and receive advice on the writing of the first draft.
By 1 July	Supervisors should have received a final title plus the detailed plan of chapters in writing . Students and supervisors should have arranged a timetable for: a) receiving and returning a first partial draft; and b) supervisions during the summer vacation.
By mid-August	Students should have submitted any drafts for comment to their supervisors. Note that a rough or incomplete draft early in the summer is more useful to you than a more polished effort at the last minute.

Early September Submission deadline

As the dissertation is an independent project, students are expected to arrange their own topics and supervisors. The programme directors are available to provide general advice about topics and suggestions for potential supervisors, but students are responsible for arranging to meet their supervisors, agreeing a dissertation timetable, and ensuring that their supervisors are provided with their summer address and are aware of any periods when they will not be available. Note that it is the students' responsibility to keep in touch with their supervisors, not the other way around.

Each student will be supervised for the dissertation by a member of staff teaching on the degree. The supervisor will help the candidate to select a manageable topic and provide guidance and help with the location of appropriate sources and secondary reading. The supervisor should meet with the candidate at least twice and no more than four times between the beginning of June and the beginning of September to discuss the dissertation and offer further guidance and suggestions. The supervisor may read up to 4,000 words of the MA dissertation in draft form. It is advisable that the supervisor see at least part of the dissertation early during the summer so that any basic flaws in thinking or presentation can be corrected at the outset. The supervisor must ensure that the candidate is aware of any long periods when she/he will not be available. It is important for the supervisor and candidate to agree upon a dissertation timetable by the end of June, as **members of the academic staff are not continuously available throughout the summer months**. Please note also that a supervisor may be unable to contribute constructively to a dissertation if

presented with a draft late in the summer.

The MA dissertation must:

- be **12,000 words** long **including footnotes but excluding bibliography and appendices**. Remaining within the prescribed word count is part of the challenge of writing a dissertation, not an optional or unimportant detail; please note the College penalties for over-length work (p. 6 above). Quotations count towards the total and should thus be brief; quotations from foreign languages should be accompanied by a translation added in a footnote; translations, too, count toward the word count. Please note that appendices should be used for giving supporting data only; they must not contain additional discussion.
- contain an **accurate** word count at the end.
- be **ANONYMOUS**. Although the dissertation may seem to be a very individual piece of work, it is examined anonymously as are all other pieces of assessed work. For this reason, candidates should never include dedications, thanks to supervisors, or other personal expressions in their work.
- be typed in 1.5 or double-spacing, with pages numbered consecutively.
- have a table of contents with page numbers.
- be submitted in one electronic copy to TurnItIn, by the advertised deadline.
- be submitted with your candidate number written accurately on the first page.
- be written in clear and grammatical English, properly spelled and punctuated.
- be provided with references showing the sources that have been used, formatted according to the guidelines published in an approved Referencing Style.
- be provided with a bibliography formatted according to the guidelines published in an approved Referencing Style.
- be **either** work based on hitherto unused material **or** a new critical exposition of existing knowledge in an appropriate field of study.
- show an awareness of previous scholarship done in the area.
- be appropriate to a degree in Medieval Studies.
- be approved by the supervisor.
- be the candidate's own work. Any quotation from the published or unpublished work of other persons must be clearly indicated as such and acknowledged: failure to do so will be considered an examination offence and will render the candidate liable to the penalties incurred by cheating (please see also the discussion of plagiarism in the RDC booklet).

Please consult the marking criteria in Appendix 1 for information regarding how the dissertation will be assessed.

Some advice:

- Start work on the dissertation as soon as possible: three months melt away very quickly.
- Right from the start, always take detailed notes, with full bibliographical details, including page references, for everything you read. You will not want to waste time at the end rushing back to a distant library for a detail that you omitted to note the first time around.
- If you are unsure about the best way to approach writing a longer piece of writing like this, seek help as early as possible. In addition to instructors on the degree, you may wish to consult a writing guide, such as: Nigel Fabb and Alan Durant, *How to Write Essays and Dissertations: A Guide for English Literature Students*, 2nd edn (Harlow: Pearson, 2005).
- Keep in contact with your supervisor and try to submit a draft to her/him as soon as possible so that, if you are not on the right lines, the problem can be quickly corrected, and, if you are on the right lines, you can feel encouraged.
- Aim to have the whole dissertation in draft by the beginning of August. This allows you time for checking, correcting, and responding to your supervisor's comments.
- Ensure that your supervisor can contact you, especially over the summer.
- Try not to go off at tangents: keep your main objective in mind and do not waste precious time on interesting side-lines.
- Do the most difficult and distant research first.

- Check very carefully before and after word processing. Ensure that notes correlate with numbers in the text.
- Remember that this is not your final word on the subject: the dissertation is unlikely to be published as it stands, and there is time for rethinking after the dissertation has been examined.
- Keep your department informed of illness or problems that might delay your submission.

10.4 Marking Criteria

These are general criteria which apply to all work completed during the Medieval MA. More specific criteria for individual assignments may also be supplied.

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 will receive a mark of 62%, 65% or 68%. A 62% represents a low merit, while a 68% indicates a high merit.

High Distinction 82 / 85 / 88

To award a high distinction, examiners will be looking for:

- conformity with the requirements of the assignment (i.e. word-length, format, etc);
- publishable quality;
- the ability to plan, organise, and execute a project independently to the highest professional standards;
- exceptional standards of accuracy, expression, and presentation;
- the highest professional levels of fluency, clarity, and academic style;
- outstanding engagement with and analysis of primary sources leading to strikingly original lines of enquiry;
- an outstanding ability to analyse and evaluate secondary sources critically and to formulate questions which lead to original lines of enquiry;
- exceptional creativity, originality, and independence of thought.

Distinction 72 / 75 / 78

To award a distinction, examiners will be looking for:

- conformity with the requirements of the assignment (i.e. word-length, format, etc);
- potentially publishable ideas, arguments, or discoveries;
- the ability to plan, organise, and execute a project independently to a professional standard;
- excellent standards of accuracy, expression, and presentation;
- fluency, clarity, and mastery of academic style;
- strong engagement with and analysis of primary sources leading to original lines of enquiry;
- the ability to analyse and evaluate secondary sources critically and to formulate questions which lead to original lines of enquiry;
- creativity, originality, and independence of thought.

Merit 62 / 65 / 68

To award a merit, examiners will be looking for:

- conformity with the requirements of the assignment (i.e. word length, format, etc);
- evidence of the potential to undertake original research given appropriate guidance and support;
- high standards of accuracy, expression, and presentation;
- skilful handling of academic style;
- sustained engagement with and analysis of primary sources;
- some ability to analyse and evaluate secondary sources critically;
- some creativity, originality, and independence of thought;
- work that is approaching the level of a distinction.

Pass 52 / 55 / 58

To award a pass mark, examiners will be looking for:

- conformity with the requirements of the assignment (i.e. word length, format, etc);

- the ability to engage in research involving a moderate degree of originality;
- a competent standard of organisation, expression, and accuracy;
- competence in the handling of academic style;
- sound knowledge and understanding of key sources of information;
- the ability to construct coherent and relevant answer to questions;
- work that is at a basic postgraduate level.

Marginal Fail 42 / 45 / 48%

Examiners will award a marginal fail if they find:

- non-conformity with some of the requirements of the assignment;
- insufficient knowledge and comprehension of essential sources of information;
- poorly developed argumentation;
- poor levels of clarity and accuracy in written presentation;
- occasional errors and confusions;
- little evidence of independent thought;
- work that is slightly below an acceptable postgraduate standard.

Fail 0-39%

Examiners will award a failing mark if they find:

- non-conformity with the requirements of the assignment;
- work that is not recognisable as academic writing;
- confused, fragmentary, or only rudimentary knowledge and comprehension of essential sources of information;
- incomplete or incoherent argumentation;
- a lack of clarity and accuracy in written presentation;
- substantial errors and confusions;
- no evidence of independent thought;
- work that is clearly below an acceptable postgraduate standard.