

Programme Specification

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| Course Record Information | |
| Name and level of final & intermediate Awards | BA/BA (hons) History; Certificate of Higher Education in History; Diploma of Higher Education in History |
| Awarding Body | University of Westminster |
| Location of Delivery | Regent |
| Mode of Study | Full- and part-time (day) or mixed modes |
| UW Course Code | BSOCSCI |
| JACS Code | V100 |
| UCAS Code | V100 |
| QAA Subject Benchmarking Group | History |
| Professional Body Accreditation | |
| Date of initial course approval/last review | November 2008 |
| Date of Programme Specification | July 2013 |

Admissions Requirements

3 'A' Levels (A2) at grades BBC or AB if only taking 2 A-levels plus English GCSE at grade C or above;
BTec MMM;
Access: 48 credits at level 3 and the remainder at level 2;
International Bac: 28 points and English 5/6 IELTS points;

A variety of non-standard vocational, professional, experiential and other qualifications may be accepted, with evidence of capacity both to benefit from and to complete the course.

Aims of the course

It is taken as self-evident that knowledge and understanding of the human past is of incalculable value both to the individual and to society and large.¹ It is the first object of the BA (hons) History degree at Westminster to enable students to acquire this knowledge and understanding.

¹ QAA Assurance Agency for Higher Education, *History 2007*, p.1.

The subject matter of our discipline, distinguishing it from other humanities and social sciences, consists of 'the attempts of human beings in the past to organise life materially and conceptually, individually and collectively, while the object of studying these things is to widen students' experience and develop qualities of perception and judgement'.² It is not our intention therefore merely to hand down a corpus of agreed knowledge, but rather to inculcate a critical, analytical and independent frame of mind and to tutor students in the skills to analyse, synthesise and communicate their findings to others in a variety of forms. More specifically, the course aims to do the following:

- to enable students to fulfil their potential;
- to initiate students into a community of historical scholarship and research, and to equip them with the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary for the world of work, higher level study and life-long learning;
- to provide a wide variety of modules in history which will engage, stimulate, challenge and enthuse students, to develop their qualities of perception and judgement;
- to introduce students to the range of the discipline of history, and provide a curriculum in which key skills are introduced early and developed through core modules;
- to promote academic and personal progression through a programme which offers increasing specialisation and demands higher-order work at upper levels, culminating in the final demonstration of independent learning in a self-managed dissertation;
- to use a range of teaching, learning and assessment methods to provide learning opportunities which motivate, stimulate and challenge students, with the over-riding aim of helping them learn;
- to set learning outcomes which are appropriate in content and academic level, and confer awards consistent with the level of individual student achievement;
- to encourage students to make the best use of the unparalleled opportunities for independent historical study and research in London.

Employment and Further Study Opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, ie employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses;
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students;
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision;
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements which will inform the service delivered to students.

² Ibid., p.2.

The study of history fosters critical, reflective and creative capacities which are of continued value and relevance both in further study and the world of work. History graduates have access to the range of professional employment and study opportunities available to social science and humanities graduates and our graduates commonly obtain employment in commercial, industrial and public service management, business and finance professions, marketing, sales and public relations, teaching and lecturing, librarianship, and archive and museum work.

Many recent graduates are now employed as teachers of history in schools and universities, while others are employed in the British Library and the Imperial War Museum. Several recent graduates are currently undertaking study towards PhDs in history, two having completed in 2009/10, while many more are developing careers in a wide variety of private and public sector professions.

Course Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. They are 'threshold' statements of achievement and are linked to the knowledge, under They are 'threshold' statements of achievement, that is to say, those outcomes achieved by a student who successfully completes the programme. Students who successfully complete the BA (hons) History at Westminster will have achieved the following learning outcomes:

- command of a substantial body of historical knowledge, in British, European and world history from the late eighteenth to the late twentieth centuries;
- the ability to develop and sustain historical arguments in a variety of literary forms, formulating appropriate questions and utilising evidence;
- an ability to read, analyse and reflect critically and contextually upon contemporary texts and other primary sources;
- an ability to read, analyse and reflect critically and contextually upon secondary evidence, including historical writings and the interpretations of historians;
- an appreciation of the complexity of reconstructing the past, the problematic and varied nature of historical evidence;
- an understanding of the varieties of approaches to understanding, constructing and interpreting the past; and, where relevant, a knowledge of concepts and theories derived from the humanities and social sciences;
- the ability to gather and deploy evidence and data; to find, retrieve, sort and exchange new information;
- a command of comparative perspectives, including the ability to compare the histories of different countries, societies and cultures;
- awareness of continuity and change over extended time periods;
- an understanding of the development of history as a discipline and an awareness of different historical methodologies;
- the ability to design, research and present a sustained and independently-conceived piece of historical writing (dissertation);
- the ability to address historical problems in depth, involving the use of contemporary sources and advanced secondary literature;
- clarity, fluency and coherence in written expression;
- clarity, fluency and coherence in oral expression;

- the ability to work collaboratively and to participate constructively in group discussion.

Knowledge and Understanding

The BA (hons) History degree is based in the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Languages in the University of Westminster, at the heart of London. Modern British history is the focus of our study, and we aim to provide knowledge and understanding of the emergence of the modern British state and modern British society, since the end of the Napoleonic Wars to the recent past.

We emphasise however, that the UK was uniquely affected by her relationships with the rest of the world, finding herself at the centre of three concentric circles: the Empire/Commonwealth, Europe and later the USA. Her domestic affairs (constitution, economy, society) determined and influenced her external relationships and these in turn affected her own internal development. All our modules therefore to a greater or lesser extent contribute to students' knowledge and understanding of these processes.

'Awareness of continuity and change over time is central to an historical awareness',³ and our relatively long definition of 'modern' history gives us a sufficiently extended *time depth* to open the way to the insights which stem from the juxtaposition of past and present.

And while modern Britain is undoubtedly the focus of our study, we are aware of the benefits accruing from comparative perspectives, so that our programme allows serious and sustained comparison with the history of other societies and cultures. We have deliberately included a broad *geographical range* of modules, not only to allow these comparative perspectives, but to explore the impact for Britain's own development, of her interactions with the Europe, the Americas, and her empire/commonwealth.

The ability to know, use and understand *contemporary sources* is central to the skill of the qualified historian, and all of our modules, at all levels, include intensive critical work on primary texts, defined in the broadest sense, to include texts, artefacts, visual evidence, the physical environment, films, posters, official records and so on. And the *critical awareness* which students are expected to exercise in the use of contemporary sources is mirrored in the expectation that they will reflect critically on the nature of their own discipline, its social rationale, its theoretical underpinnings, its intellectual standing, as well as the limitations of the historical method. Overtly this is conducted through a second-year historiography and research methods module, but students are expected to demonstrate wider historiographical and methodological awareness and understanding in all the modules they undertake in second and third year and in *extended piece of written work* (the dissertation) they undertake in their final year.

³ Ibid., p.6.

The overarching theme of our course is the development of the modern British state, modern British society, and the history of Britain's external relationships. It is inevitable therefore that most of our modules might be categorised as 'political' or 'diplomatic' history. However, the modern historical discipline 'comprises many varieties, each with its distinctive focus and theoretical orientation'.⁴ Moreover it is impossible to understand the development of modern British society entirely from a political or diplomatic standpoint, and we therefore provide access to the diversity of specialisms in history through modules the focus and orientation of which are primarily social, cultural or economic. The historiography module also allows students the opportunity to gain a critical awareness that they are many principles of selection and modes of enquiry, while the dissertation allows students to pursue any mode of enquiry or theoretical perspective which attracts their interest students the opportunity to gain a critical awareness that they are many principles of selection and modes of enquiry, while the dissertation allows students to pursue any mode of enquiry or theoretical perspective which attracts their interest.

Specific Skills

The History team at Westminster endorses the view of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, that history degree students should undertake programmes which foster and inculcate the following skills and qualities:

- the ability to understand how people have existed, acted and thought in the always different contexts of the past;
- the ability to read and analyse texts and other primary sources, both critically and empathetically, while addressing questions of genre, content, perspective and purpose;
- the appreciation of the complexity and diversity of situations, events and mentalities, an emphasis central to history's character as an anti-reductionist discipline, fostering intellectual maturity;
- the understanding of the problems inherent in the historical record itself: awareness of a range of viewpoints and the way to cope with this; appreciation of the range of problems involved in the interpretation of complex, ambiguous, conflicting and often incomplete material; a feeling for the limitations of knowledge and the dangers of simplistic explanations;
- basic critical skills: a recognition that statements are not all of equal validity, that there are ways of testing them, and that historians operate by rules of evidence which, though themselves subject to critical evaluation, are also a component of intellectual integrity and maturity.

⁴ Ibid., p.6.

Key Transferable skills

The generic or transferable skills acquired through the study of history at Westminster are:

- self-discipline;
- self-direction;
- independence of mind, and initiative;
- the ability to work with others, and have respect for others' reasoned views;
- the ability to gather, organize and deploy evidence, data and information; and familiarity with appropriate means of identifying, finding, retrieving, sorting and exchanging information;
- analytical ability, and the capacity to consider and solve problems, including complex problems to which there is no single solution;
- structure, coherence, clarity and fluency of oral expression;
- structure, coherence, clarity and fluency of written expression;
- intellectual integrity and maturity;
- imaginative insight and creativity.⁵

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods

The School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Languages is renowned for the international quality of its research and teaching. Modules are delivered by internationally recognised research-active specialist staff who are able to offer up-to-date insights and experience in their teaching. We are committed to research-led teaching and research seminars are open to undergraduates.

We make full use of innovative and traditional teaching approaches within the Department of Social and Historical Studies. Teaching is through lectures, seminars and workshops. A wide variety of assessment methods is used. Some modules are assessed by course work only and some by a combination of course work and exam. Course work assessments include essays, presentations, statistical exercises, book reviews, and documentary analysis.

⁵ Ibid., p.5.

Course Structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Undergraduate students study 120 credits per year.

Credit Level 4

| Module Title | Status | Value |
|--|--------|-------|
| 1HIS415 Reaction and Reform: a British History 1783-1867 | Core | 30 |
| 1HIS416 Britain Abroad: British Foreign Policy since 1815 | Core | 30 |
| 1HIS417 The French Revolution 1789-1815 | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS418 The Great Wen: London in the Age of the Victorians 1837-1900 | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS419 Modern America: Social and Political Change 1850-1920 | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS420 The London Blitz: Image, Impact, Legacy 1940-1951 | Option | 15 |
| SHIS400 Cosmopolis: London since 1960 | Option | 15 |

Award of Certificate of Higher Education available

Credit Level 5

| Module Title | Status | Value |
|--|--------|-------|
| 1HIS515 Democracy and Dictatorship: a History of Europe in the Twentieth Century | Core | 30 |
| 1HIS516 New Liberals to New Labour: British Politics 1905-1987 | Core | 30 |
| 1HIS524 Historiography and Research Methods | Core | 15 |
| 1HIS525 Modern Ireland 1867-1923 | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS526 Empires in the Age of the New Imperialism | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS527 A Cultural History of the First World War: Practices, Production, Memory and the European Experience | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS528 The Cinema as a Source for Historians | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS529 The Spanish Civil War: Spain in Crisis 1931-39 | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS531 Public History: London, History and Museums | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS532 Jack the Ripper's London: Myth, Reality and Popular History | Option | 15 |

Award of Diploma of Higher Education available

Credit Level 6

| Module Title | Status | Value |
|---|--------|-------|
| 1HIS601 Wild West: Representations of the American Frontier | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS602 America and the Vietnam War: Realities and Representations | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS603 British Defence Policy since 1919 | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS604 Divided Society: Britain between the Wars | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS605 The Russian Revolution 1917-1921 | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS606 Fascism and Authoritarianism in Interwar Europe | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS607 England since 1945: Social and Cultural Change | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS655 Britain and the Experience of the Great War | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS656 The Troubles: Britain and Northern Ireland 1968-1998 | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS658 Women's History: Women and the Women's Movement 1918-1970 | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS660 Practical Work in Historical Archives | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS661 Origins of the Second World War: A Diplomatic History 1919-1941 | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS665 Origins of the Cold War: A Diplomatic History 1939-1953 | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS668 A Cultural History of the Second World War: Practices, Production, Memory and the European Experience | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS669 The Historical Foundations of the European Union | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS670 End of Empire: Decolonisation since 1945 | Option | 15 |
| 1HIS699 History Dissertation | Core | 30 |

Award of BA available

Award of BA (Hons) available.

NB: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year.

Progression Requirements

The BA (Hons) History and its intermediate awards operate in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and the *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

A pass in a module is achieved when the overall mark is at least 40% and the marks for each individual element (eg coursework and exam) are at least 30%.

In order to progress from year one to year two, a full-time student must obtain a 40% overall average at level 4;

In order to progress from year two to year three, a full-time student must obtain a minimum of 165 credits at level 4 or above, including a minimum of 75 credits at level 5 or above.

Awards

Award of a Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)

(i) To be eligible for the award of a Certificate of Higher Education, a student must have:

a) obtained a minimum of 120 credits at Level 4 or higher, including 75 credits passed and at least a condoned credit in each of the remaining modules worth 45 credits; and

b) satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme.

(ii) The University may award:

a) a **Certificate of Higher Education with Merit** to a student whose marks average at least 60% across the best 105 credits;

b) a **Certificate of Higher Education with Distinction** to a student whose marks average at least 70% across the best 105 credits.

Award of a Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)

(i) To be eligible for the award of a Diploma of Higher Education, a student must have:

a) obtained at least 240 credits including:

- a minimum of 120 credits at Level 4 or higher, including 75 credits passed and at least a condoned credit in each of the remaining modules worth 45 credits; and

- a minimum of 120 credits at Level 5 or higher; and

b) satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme.

- (ii) The University may award:
- a) a **Diploma of Higher Education with Merit** to a student whose marks average at least 60% across the best 105 credits at Level 5 or higher;
 - b) a **Diploma of Higher Education with Distinction** to a student whose marks average at least 70% across the best 105 credits at Level 5 or higher.

Award of a Non-Honours Degree

- (i) To be eligible for the award of a Non-Honours Degree, a student must have:
- a) obtained at least 300 credits including:
 - a minimum of 120 credits at Level 4 or higher, including 75 credits passed and at least a condoned credit in each of the remaining modules worth 45 credits; and
 - a minimum of 120 credits at Level 5 or higher; and
 - a minimum of 60 credits at Level 6 or higher.
 - b) satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme.
- (ii) The University may award:
- a) a **Non-Honours Degree with Merit** to a student whose marks average at least 60% across the best 150 credits at Levels 5 and 6;
 - b) a **Non-Honours Degree with Distinction** to a student whose marks average at least 70% across the best 150 credits at Levels 5 and 6.

Award of an Honours Degree

- (i) To be eligible for the award of an Honours Degree, a student must have obtained at least 360 credits including:
- a) - a minimum of 120 credits at Level 4 or higher, including 75 credits passed and at least a condoned credit in each of the remaining modules worth 45 credits; and
 - a minimum of 120 credits at Level 5 or higher; and
 - a minimum of 120 credits at Level 6 or higher; and
 - b) attempted modules with a maximum value of 330 credits at Level 5 and 6; and
 - c) satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme.

Time Limits

The time limit for a student to complete his/her programme of study shall be as follows:

| | Full-time study | Part-time or mixed mode study |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| CertHE | 3 years | 5 years |
| DipHE | 5 years | 6 years |
| Degree | 6 years | 8 years |
| Honours degree | 6 years | 8 years |

These are the overall time limits for programmes of study with the substantive mode of attendance indicated above and **include** any periods for the suspension of studies or the retrieval of failed modules. The time limit for any programme of study not listed above shall be determined by the relevant University Validation Panel.

Support for Students

On arrival, an induction programme will introduce students to the staff responsible for the course, the Library and IT facilities and to the School Registry. Students will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Students are allocated a personal tutor who can provide advice and guidance on academic matters.

Learning support includes the Library which, across its four sites, holds print collections of 356,000 printed books, 29,000 print and e-journals, over 45,000 electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Access to all resources is facilitated through Library Search.

There are over 3,500 computers spread over the four University sites for students use. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students can access course materials and communicate with staff and other students via message boards.

At University level, Services for Students provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The International Office provides particular support for international students. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support all students during their time at the University.

Key Reference Points for the course

Internally

The structure and operation of the course is set by the University framework for undergraduate courses, the University handbook of academic regulations and the

University Quality Assurance handbook. The course actively engages with University of Westminster and SSHL policies including those relating to teaching, learning and assessment, on-line learning etc. The course also reflects staff expertise and research interests.

Externally

In designing the course, reference has been made to the QAA Qualifications Framework and the QAA benchmark statement for History to inform the content of the degree. The design of the course has also benefited from discussions with external examiners and other colleagues.

Quality Management and Enhancement

Course Management

The BA (hons) History degree and all the modules that make up the degree are the responsibility of the Department of Social and Historical Studies, managed by the teaching team and co-ordinated by the Course Leader. Subject meetings are attended by full-time, fractional and PTVL staff. However, overall responsibility lies with the Head of the Department of Social and Historical Studies and policy decisions are guided by policies at School level or University level. Course committees are held once a term on a departmental basis, with representatives from the School Registry, computing, library and teaching team members to update information about any changes or new initiatives, and to provide students with an opportunity to raise issues or provide feedback on specific academic services, policies or areas of concern.

Course approval, monitoring and review

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 1999. The Panel included internal peers from the University and external subject specialists to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers. Periodic Course Review helps to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant.

The course is monitored each year by the School to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from each Course Committee, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from External Examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. The School Learning and Teaching Quality Committee considers the School action plans resulting from this process and the outcomes are reported to the Academic Council, which has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality and standards in the University.

Student involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways. The most formal mechanism for feedback on the course is the Course Committee. Student representatives will be elected to sit on the Committee to represent the views of their peer group in various discussions. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the Course Committee. All students are invited to complete a Module Feedback questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the Module Leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced. The University also has an annual Student Experience Survey which elicits feedback from students about their course and University services.

Students meet with Review Panels when the periodic review of the course is conducted to provide oral feedback on their experience on the course. Student feedback from Course Committees are part of the Schools quality assurance evidence base.

For more information about this course contact:

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Please note – This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.