

This degree enables students to undertake assessed work and independent projects in the historical issues and controversies that interest them most. Students are introduced to key historical approaches, sources and methods and learn to apply them to their particular subject area. The course offers wide-ranging research training, and importance is placed on the use of architecture, material culture, archaeology and literature to aid historical research and understanding. Field trips and museum visits form a key part of the training programme. The degree can be undertaken in any historic area where Institute of Historical Research (IHR) staff have supervisory competence.

All students will take the core 'Historical Training' and 'Cities, States and Localities in History' modules, which introduce them to ideas and methods involved in historical research from the medieval period to the twentieth century. Further skills-based training is provided by specialised courses at the IHR. Instead of a taught option course, students may undertake an independent project of 5,000 words on a subject agreed with their supervisor, which will require the completion of some original historical research and/or source criticism, and then a dissertation. The project and dissertation need not be in the same broad subject area or the same historical period.

Alongside the development of techniques, skills and knowledge relevant to individual interests and research needs, the programme aims to equip students for both independent research and analysis in primary and secondary material, and writing at an advanced level, thus fostering their intellectual development and independent learning ability required for continuing professional and personal development.

Degree structure

Students take two historical training modules, one special project module, and then complete a supervised dissertation of 15,000 words.

Specific training in the use of documentary and other sources is included in Module 1, while skills training in other areas (eg. databases, palaeography, quantification) is delivered through the IHR's many dedicated training courses.

Module 1: Historical Training: Methods and Approaches to Historical Research

This module will introduce students to advanced historical studies. It will focus on providing students with practical historical skills and a practical understanding of different historical approaches and methods. It will offer students an introduction to the theoretical basis of historical approaches and offer the opportunity to explore how related disciplines (such as archaeology, anthropology, sociology and political science) have helped historians adopt new approaches to the past.

Module 2: History in Context: Cities, States and Localities in History

This module will introduce students to the historiography of cities, states and localities from the medieval period to the twentieth century. Students will examine the ways in which historians have interpreted the development of modern culture and society and their use of sources in historical research. The history of Britain, London and southern England will be used as the test-bed for these issues, but students will also be encouraged, where possible, to adopt a national and international comparative perspective. The course will help to provide students with a robust historiographical and methodological framework for their own studies, equipping them with the intellectual toolkit for their own independent work.

Module 3: Option Module

The special project is an original extended assignment based around the individual student's particular area of interest. It requires students to show that they can analyse primary source material in an effective and convincing way and place it in context to throw new light on a specific historical problem or controversy. The project may focus on a particular historical event or how a particular cultural activity (such as an exhibition, film or play) has interpreted such an event. Students will not be required to attend formal weekly classes but they

will attend group discussions on the practical application of historical methods and at least four supervisory sessions.

Module 4: Supervised Dissertation (15,000 words)

This will be on a topic of the student's choice, agreed with the Course Director.

Summary information - MA in Historical Research



Offered by:

Institute of Historical Research. IHR is an important resource and meeting place for researchers from all over the world. It provides a stimulating research environment supported by the IHR's three research centres: the Victoria County History of England; the Centre for Metropolitan and Regional History; the Centre for Contemporary British History.

Degree structure:

Students take two core courses and an option course, plus a dissertation of 15,000 words

Mode of study:

12 months full-time or 24 months part-time.

Fees (2008/09):

Home and EU students: £3,724 full-time or £1,862 part-time. Overseas students: £9,748

More information:

School prospectus: www.sas.ac.uk/postgraduate.html

Institute details: <http://www.history.ac.uk/degrees/>

For details of entry requirements, tuition fees, funding opportunities, English language requirements, disability, accommodation and how to apply, please consult the School prospectus. Detailed course descriptions and information about assessment are available on the Institute's postgraduate study website.

The School of Advanced Study at the University of London brings together the specialised scholarship and resources of ten prestigious postgraduate research Institutes to offer academic opportunities, facilities and stimulation across a wide range of subject fields in the humanities and social sciences.