



INSTITUTE OF
HISTORICAL
RESEARCH

SCHOOL OF
ADVANCED STUDY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

2025

Postgraduate programmes

Prospectus

history.ac.uk

World class. Worldwide.

Join the World Class

1 Quality of learning
Learn from leading specialists in the field, and take advantage of the opportunity to work alongside established research centres in History.

2 World-class resources
Enjoy access to one of the world's greatest open-shelf collections of primary works, reference materials, bibliographical and archival guides in the study of History.

3 An enriching scholarly environment
Join our lively programme of events, conferences and seminars throughout the academic year, as well as those organised by the School of Advanced Study.

4 An intellectual hub
Study in Bloomsbury, the intellectual heart of London, where you will have easy access to world-class libraries and facilities, including Senate House Library, the British Library and British Museum.

5 Join the World Class
Graduates of our programmes are awarded a University of London degree, an internationally recognised mark of quality.

A background photograph of several graduates in black academic caps and gowns, looking forward with serious expressions. The focus is on a young Black man in the foreground, with other graduates visible behind him.

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The Institute of Historical Research

The Institute of Historical Research was founded in 1921 to address the limited opportunities for historical research and training in the UK.

Born in the aftermath of the First World War, and after the right to vote was extended to some women and more men than ever before, the Institute was designed to be a unique and distinctive organisation that worked for the good of the profession, transforming the study of the past into a powerful tool to inform policy.

The IHR was significant in its aim to place the UK historical profession in a global context, bringing international scholars together in a variety of fora. It was designed to provide historically informed research to government, to serve as a repository

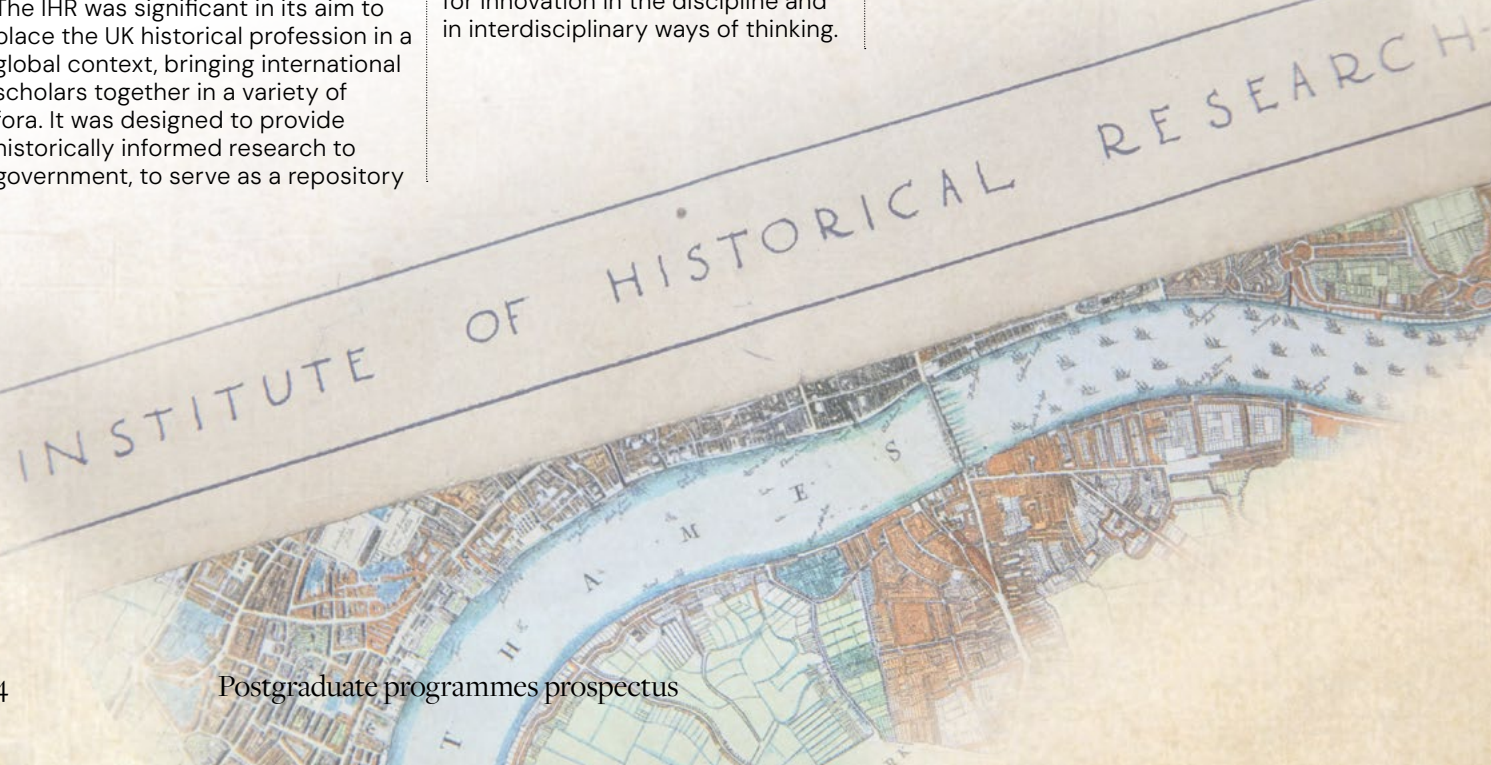
of bibliographic information, to be a testing ground for new historical ideas and methods, and a meeting place for historians of all nationalities.

The IHR champions the value and importance of history in public life and as an academic discipline. We offer training and support to the current and next generations of historians. We provide the intellectual infrastructure for historians, through ambitious collaborative research initiatives, seminar series and events, digital resources and a 200,000-volume specialist library.

Most importantly, we act as a hub for innovation in the discipline and in interdisciplinary ways of thinking.

We connect scholars, communities, policy-makers, artists, archives, libraries, museums and industry to create new forms of knowledge that speak to contemporary concerns and intellectual challenges.

We are driven by a core set of values that are central to the way we work as an organisation, how we work with others, and what we wish for the discipline as a whole. These are: **curiosity, integrity, inclusivity, collaboration, care and equality.**



The School of Advanced Study



The School of Advanced Study, University of London, is a unique institution in UK higher education.

Comprising eight internationally renowned research institutes and a variety of central academic initiatives, it is located within the Bloomsbury precinct of the University in the intellectual heart of London.

Founded in 1994, the School of Advanced Study is the only institution in the UK that is nationally funded to promote and facilitate research in the humanities. It performs a vital role as a driving force for knowledge sharing across the humanities in the UK and beyond, and receives special funding for this

purpose from the Office for Students (formerly the Higher Education Funding Council for England). The School works in collaboration with other organisations, notably the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the British Academy, other UK universities, independent research organisations, learned societies and government agencies.

The eight institutes of the School, many of which have long and distinguished histories of their own, are dedicated to serving the research communities of their disciplines, both nationally and internationally. Together they complement the work of others by offering a broad research base and providing a range of services that far exceed the capacity of any one

individual university to support, inspire and advance research activity. The School also enhances the dissemination of that research beyond what an individual or their institution could achieve alone.

Underpinning the School's national role is the research and scholarship undertaken by its academic staff. The process of undertaking challenging research in order to extend the boundaries of knowledge across disciplines and in collaboration with researchers from around the world is critical to the School's function as an innovative space for advanced study and its commitment to the highest standards of scholarship.

Studying at the Institute of Historical Research



MPhil/PhD in History

Undertaking doctoral research allows you to develop in-depth knowledge, while making a meaningful contribution to your chosen field. With guidance from our expert supervisors, you'll carry out extensive independent research culminating in a thesis of up to 100,000 words.

The Institute of Historical Research has a broad remit to cover the history of the world from the fourth to the 21st century, but has particular strengths in British and European history.

The Institute offers doctoral research supervision in the following broad areas:

- Medieval British history
- Modern British history
- Local, regional and community histories of the British Isles
- Place and Identity
- Early medieval Northumbria and the north
- Later medieval armies and warfare

- Urban and metropolitan history (especially London), including comparative approaches across Europe and elsewhere
- Late medieval and early modern urban history
- Digital history and historical geographic information system
- History of propaganda in the 20th century
- History of the First and Second World Wars
- History of emotions in modern Britain
- The everyday lives of 'ordinary' people
- Architecture, planning and the built environment in Britain from the 20th century onward
- The British Commonwealth and British decolonisation
- History and policy
- Medievalism and other usages of the past
- American foreign relations
- US political history.

Why study with us?

World-class resources

As a student of the Institute of Historical Research, you will have access to the world-renowned Wohl library, with over 200,000 history books and periodicals, and to the Institute's digital and online resources. You can also take advantage of free access to the University of London's Senate House Library with over two million books, and other unique collections such as the Institute of Classical Studies Library and the Warburg Institute Library.

The Institute is at the centre of academic history, and has partnerships with numerous nationally and internationally renowned library and art collections, as well as links with the cultural and heritage sector, professional bodies, Guilds and Livery Companies, Archives, the City of London and higher education institutions in the UK and internationally.

A scholarly community

Students at the Institute are welcomed to the wide range of history seminars and specialist research training programmes, as well as benefitting from the Institute's network of senior, honorary, research and associate fellows.

There are opportunities to work alongside the established research centres in History – the Centre for the History of People, Place and Community and the History & Policy Unit.

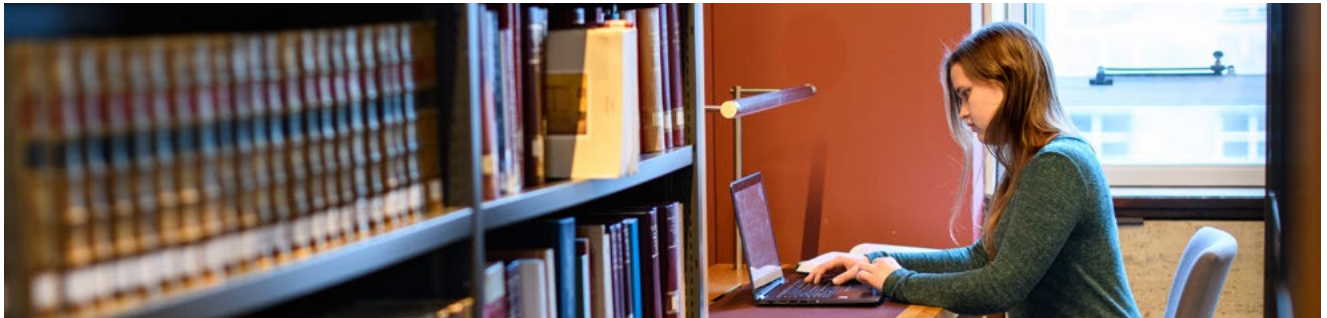
As part of the School of Advanced Study, University of London, you will also benefit from a collaborative, interdisciplinary research environment. You'll learn from leading specialists in your field; hone your research skills in our highly regarded training programmes; expand your knowledge through an extensive calendar of events, conferences and seminars and become part of

a worldwide network of humanities scholars. You will also have access to training opportunities from across the University of London's federation members through the Bloomsbury Learning Exchange and Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network.

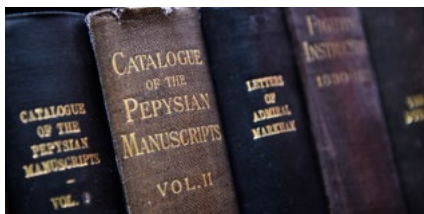
Be at the heart of a global city

The Institute is located in the heart of Bloomsbury in central London. Our location ensures that you will be able to enjoy everything the city has to offer, from the world-class resources of neighbouring institutions, such as the British Museum and the British Library, to shops, restaurants, parks, clubs and theatres.

London is regularly named the best university city in the world for its welcoming attitude, diversity and vibrant, student-friendly culture.



MA History, Place and Community



About the degree

All histories are grounded in place. Communities shape our identities, whether through local neighbourhoods or global diasporas, or the stories we remember together over time. Today, the intersections between history, place and community have never been more visible in public discourse, heritage interpretation, conservation and policy.

This exciting new programme is designed to be flexible and centred on your needs: whether you're building the foundations for higher-level research, looking to develop applied skills for your professional development, or simply interested in your own place and its history.

Modules can be taken individually as credit-bearing University of London micro-qualifications, or you can choose to take the full MA programme. Hybrid teaching includes online seminars and asynchronous content – as well

as intensive 'conference style' teaching days each term, making the most of the outstanding IHR collections and our location at Senate House in the heart of London.

Your final project can be either a traditional dissertation, or a special project like a podcast series or creative piece – or you can choose the placement route, tackling a critical challenge through hands-on experience with one of our partners across the heritage and archives sector.

The MA encourages you to ask and answer these questions in whatever place and time draws your interest. This flexibility in approach also extends to the structure and teaching format: the course is taught using a hybrid, blended approach, making the most of London where appropriate but also allowing for study at a distance.

The IHR is the perfect place in which to engage with localities and communities: it fosters engaged, innovative research into placed histories across all regions and periods, from the rural to the urban and the parish to the metropolis. The programme also takes advantage of our location in the heart of London, which presents many opportunities for field trips, archive visits, and observation of the historic environment.

Programme structure

Core modules (you must complete all core modules)

Thinking History

Connecting History

Scoping and Planning a Research Project

Final Project/Dissertation

Optional modules (you must select three)

Applied Public History

Historic Places: Landscapes, Buildings and Significance

Layers of London: Deep Mapping London's History

Place and Policy

London History Summer School

The degree can be taken full-time over one year, or part-time over two years.

Full-time students (one year): complete three core modules and three optional modules over the first two terms. In the final term you will either write a 15,000-word dissertation or undertake a placement on which you will write a 5,500-word report.

Part-time students (two years): in year one, you will take the Thinking History core module and either one other core module and an optional module or two optional modules; in the final term, you will prepare for your dissertation or placement.

In year two, you will take either two option modules or one core module and one option module (depending upon modules taken in year one); in the final term, you will undertake your dissertation, placement or alternative output.

Postgraduate Certificate/ Postgraduate Diploma

If you cannot commit to a full MA, you can take modules from the MA programme to gain either a Postgraduate Certificate in History Place and Community (60 credits) or a Postgraduate Diploma in History Place and Community (120 credits). To enrol, you will still be required to meet all the standard entry requirements.

Teaching, learning and assessment

Our teachers are recognised experts drawn from the Institute and a range of partner organisations, including Historic England, the

National Archives, and the Historic Environment Record (HER) network, as well as smaller organisations such as the Bishopsgate Archive and the East End Women's Museum.

The degree programme consists of a total of seven modules: six 20-credit taught modules and a final independent study module – either a dissertation or a placement – worth 60 credits. These can be taken full-time (one year) or part-time (two years) for a total of 180 credits.

For the independent study element of the course – taking place in term three for full-time students or term six for part-time – you will choose between a 15,000-word dissertation or a placement with a partner organisation (of your choice, although the IHR can assist in finding suitable placements) of not fewer than eight weeks.

The taught element of programme will give you the firmest possible grounding in modern historical debates and methods, equipping you with all the skills and knowledge you need to establish yourself as a researcher in your chosen subject area. The independent study element will allow you to craft your original contribution to historical understanding in whatever way suits both the material and you.



Professor Catherine Clarke

Director of the Centre
for the History of People,
Place and Community

‘Thinking about the past – and future – of our places has never been more relevant and urgent. This programme helps you develop the skills to uncover and explore the rich stories of our places, and to bring history into vital conversation with the present: heritage interpretation, conservation, policy, and much more. The flexible final project really speaks to the distinctiveness of this programme.’

MPhil/PhD in History



About the degree

This degree presents the opportunity to gain expertise in your area of interest while also honing a range of transferable skills. On completion of your research, you will be well prepared for specialist career paths both within academia and in other scholarly professions.

The Institute of Historical Research provides first-class PhD supervision and guidance from academics who are leaders in their field. Occasionally the Institute will also agree to co-supervise with individuals outside of the IHR in order to enhance the breadth of expertise available to you.

More broadly, the School of Advanced Study draws on its expertise in research and teaching to provide programmes of varied and challenging research and skills training. These programmes help support our students and graduate researchers in their wider preparation for careers. Graduates are awarded a University of London degree.

Programme structure

The degree can be taken full-time (normally over three to four years) or part-time (normally over six to eight years), with entry in January or October. You will initially be registered for our MPhil and, providing your progress has been satisfactory, will then be upgraded to our PhD programme.

The primary activity of the PhD is the writing of a thesis of up to 100,000 words, supported by a supervision panel consisting of a primary supervisor and one or more secondary supervisors. You will meet your supervisors regularly (every four weeks) to discuss work that you have done and chapters that you have written, building towards submission of the completed thesis after three years (full-time) or six years (part-time).

Skills audits at the start and throughout your period of study will identify the specialist techniques and methods you need for your work; a bespoke training package will be assembled for you, drawing upon the resources of the Institute's nationally recognised research training programme.

You will also benefit from the lively intellectual atmosphere of the IHR and the wider University of London: you will become a member of our

friendly and supportive student body, participating in a 'Work in Progress' seminar each term and presenting at that seminar from your second year onward. You are also encouraged to participate in the regular seminars held at the Institute during the academic year.

After submission of the thesis, you will attend an oral examination conducted by an internal examiner, from the University of London, and an external examiner, normally from another British university.

PhD by Practice

Starting in September 2025 the IHR offers the option of a PhD by Practice, in which a piece of creative work will be the principal component examined alongside a shorter written critical reflection of up to 30,000 words. The creative component might be an exhibition, a podcast, a series of blog posts or a film but is not limited to these possibilities: we are delighted to hear suggestions.

Please contact Claire Langhamer, claire.langhamer@sas.ac.uk for further details of the PhD by Practice.

Supervisors: areas of interest

Dr Adam Chapman

Lecturer in Medieval History
and VCH Editor

Email: adam.chapman@sas.ac.uk

- Late medieval England and Wales (c. 1250–1500)
- Later medieval armies and warfare
- Local and regional history

Professor Catherine Clarke

Director of the Centre for the History
of People, Place and Community

Email: catherine.clarke@sas.ac.uk

- Medieval history
- Cultural history
- Place and identity
- Heritage (including interpretation practice)
- Medievalism and other uses of the past
- Interdisciplinary approaches (including digital methods, creative and practice-based elements)

Dr Justin Colson

Senior Lecturer in Urban and
Digital History

Email: justin.colson@sas.ac.uk

- Trade, merchants and occupational identity in medieval and early modern Europe
- Diet, health and the role of professional medicine in early modern communities
- History of cartography, historical mapping, transport and travel
- Digital humanities
- Historical Geographic Information Systems (H-GIS)



Dr Ashley Cox

Programme Director, University of London MA Global Diplomacy
Email: ashley.cox@london.ac.uk

- American foreign relations
- Political history of the United States

Professor Jo Fox

Dean of the School of Advanced Study
Email: jo.fox@sas.ac.uk

- History of modern propaganda and psychological warfare
- History of the First and Second World Wars
- European and British history 1900–present
- History of communications and media

Professor Claire Langhamer

Director of the Institute of Historical Research
Email: claire.langhamer@sas.ac.uk

- The everyday lives of 'ordinary' people
- Emotions and feelings
- Life histories, including oral history and Mass Observation

Professor Philip Murphy

Director of the History & Policy Unit
Email: philip.murphy@sas.ac.uk

- Twentieth-century British and Commonwealth history
- Post-war British decolonisation
- The history of the British intelligence community

Dr Ruth Slatter

Lecturer in Historic Environment and Knowledge Exchange Manager
Email: ruth.slatter@sas.ac.uk

- Historic built environment in the modern period
- Methodism in England
- Visual, material and spatial approaches to the history of 'ordinary people'

Dr Simon Trafford

Lecturer in Medieval History and Director of Studies
Email: simon.trafford@sas.ac.uk

- Early medieval north-western Europe, c.500–1200
- The kingdom of Northumbria, c.450–c.1100
- Popular medievalism, 1800–present
- Early medieval seas and rivers



Phil Winterbottom

MPhil/PhD student

'I am greatly enjoying undertaking original research. Managing my own research programme is challenging and rewarding in equal measure. I would recommend the programme for the quality of supervision, the wide range of training on offer and the benefits of being part of a relatively small postgraduate student body.'

Entry requirements



Applicants to our PhD programme are usually required to hold a master's degree. However, we will consider applications from candidates who do not meet the formal academic requirements but who offer alternative qualifications and/or relevant experience.

English is the language of instruction and you will be required to demonstrate an appropriate level of proficiency.

For more information on entry requirements, visit: bit.ly/SAS_entry-reqs

Applications

Before submitting an application, you are advised to contact a member of the academic staff who has interests in your proposed field of study to discuss your proposal.

Before agreeing to accept you, the Institute of Historical Research will require you to submit a research proposal, so it is worthwhile having this drafted ahead of a formal application.

Candidates will normally receive an initial response to their application within 28 working days. Those who have been formally interviewed will normally be informed within one week as to whether they are to be offered a place.

All applications are made online. For more information visit: bit.ly/sas-how-to-apply

“I was drawn to study at the IHR because the syllabus allows students the freedom to pursue personal interests throughout the course. This made tutorial group discussions interesting and fun as a wide range of interpretations were voiced. Teaching was informal and thought-provoking despite some subjects being quite technical. Importantly, staff support was outstanding. I was guided from a failed first essay to an overall course merit, enabling me to subsequently receive two unconditional offers for doctoral study.”

Andrew Frow-Jones
MPhil/PhD student

Further information

Fees

The University of London reserves the right to alter or withdraw courses and amend other details without prior notice. For up-to-date fees and funding opportunities, please visit: bit.ly/SAS_fees-funding

Funding opportunities

Our students fund their studies in a variety of ways including scholarships, bursaries and fellowships, as well as government loans and postgraduate loans.

The School of Advanced Study also offers a range of bursaries and studentships for applicants

on our programmes, including Institute and course specific scholarships. For further information visit: bit.ly/sas-tuition-fees

Accommodation

Full-time students, and part-time students with disabilities, may apply for accommodation in one of the University of London's award-winning intercollegiate Halls of Residence. Our Registry office will send you housing information after you have been offered a place.

To learn more about accommodation options, please visit: halls.london.ac.uk/our-accommodation

“As a small institution, I have always been impressed by the friendliness of the teaching and support staff at the IHR. Equally I have always felt supported by my fellow students, now friends. I had taken advantage of most of the IHR training opportunities before the current global crisis but continue to be amazed at the variety of online sessions available through the wider university networks. IHR seminars too have widened my interests, introducing me to previously unknown sources and methodologies.”

Janette Bright
MPhil/PhD student

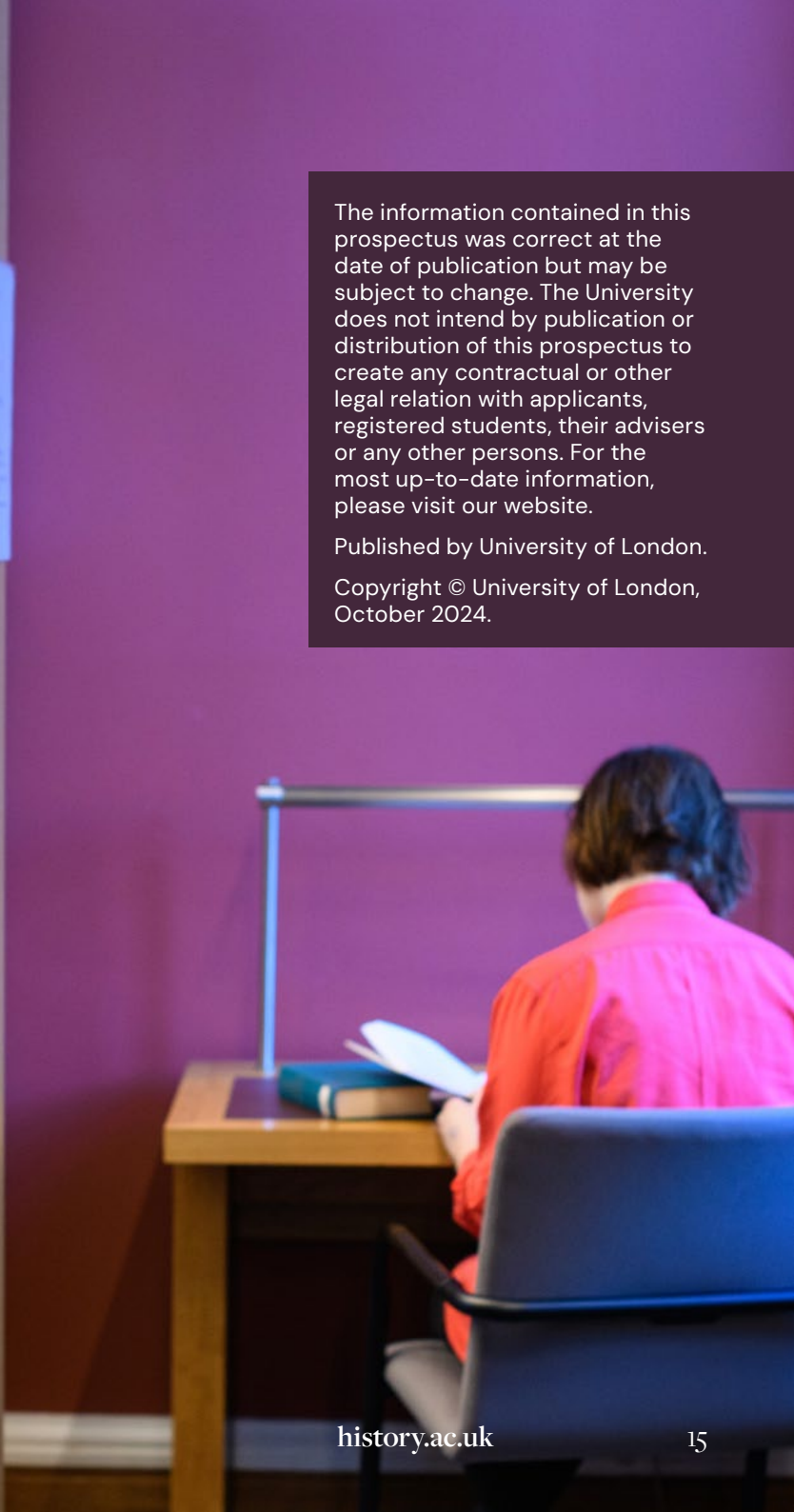




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University of London
Senate House, Malet Street
London WC1E 7HU
United Kingdom

Telephone enquiries: +44 (0)20 7862 8360

Online enquiries: london.ac.uk/enquiries



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