

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes **Honours Degree programmes in Liberal Arts, Liberal Arts with an International Year and Liberal Arts with a Language Year Abroad**. This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2016**.

The aims of the Honours Degree programmes in Liberal Arts are:

- to engage students imaginatively in the process of reading and analysing different types of texts;
- to develop knowledge and understanding relevant to the chosen fields of study;
- to provide theoretical insights and methodological techniques relevant to the creation, interpretation, and critical evaluation of knowledge in a range of disciplines;
- to enable students to develop independent critical thinking and judgement;
- to prepare students to undertake their own research under appropriate levels of supervision;
- to foster competence in at least one foreign language;
- to explore the delineation of disciplines as well as the value of interdisciplinary work;
- to encourage students to take progressive responsibility for their own study through negotiating subject areas of specialism with each other in seminars, through the informed choice of options, and through an extended piece of writing in the final year.
- to support the development of a range of transferable skills suitable both for further academic study and for a range of future careers.

Programmes are delivered in **either three or four stages**, depending upon whether a student elects to take an International Year or a Language Year Abroad.

If a student elects not to take an International Year or a Language Year Abroad, the Programme is delivered in three stages, each of which comprises one year of full-time study during which the student must follow courses to the value of four units (one unit is equivalent to 30 national credits). The programme provides progressive structures in which students are able to gain ever-wider knowledge, understanding, and appropriate skills. The programme contains a combination of mandatory non-condonable courses (in years one and two), a mandatory condonable unit in a foreign language (in year one), and a very wide range of options (in years one, two and three). At each stage students develop their own interests through informed choice of options drawn from different disciplines. In stage three all students are required to write a dissertation. The programme aims to produce graduates with a range of personal attributes relevant to the world beyond higher education, who are able to engage in lifelong learning, to consider ethics and values, and to contribute to the wider community.

If a student elects to take an International Year or a Language Year Abroad, the Programme is delivered in four stages. Stages one, two, and four each comprise one year of full-time study during which time the student must follow courses to the value of four units in each stage (one unit is equivalent to 30 national credits). The programme provides progressive structures in which students are able to gain ever-wider knowledge, understanding, and appropriate skills, including (in the case of the Language Year Abroad) in a modern foreign language. The programme contains a combination of mandatory non-condonable courses (in years one and two), a mandatory non-condonable unit in a foreign language in stages one, two and four (for the Language Year Abroad), and a very wide range of stage one, two and four options. At each stage students develop their own interests through informed choice of options drawn from different disciplines. In stage four all students are required to write a dissertation. The programme aims to produce graduates with a range of personal attributes relevant to the world beyond higher education, who are able to engage in lifelong learning, to consider ethics and values, and to contribute to the wider community. Where students are taking an International Year, they will be required to take a mandatory -condonable unit in a foreign language in stage one only.

The **Language Year Abroad** consists of a year spent partly or wholly in a country related to the language(s) studied in the programme, at a university, as a Teaching Assistant with the British Council, or in approved employment. The Language Year Abroad is assessed via full or half units to the value of two full units based either on marks awarded for courses taken at the foreign university or on a report on the work placement, written in the relevant language, plus a full or half-unit oral examination to test linguistic skills and intercultural awareness. The PRA must not be less than nine months. Students who fail to meet these minimum requirements may be required to repeat the Language Year Abroad before being allowed to progress to the final year.

Students taking an **International Year** must take courses at an overseas university nominated through the Erasmus or Student Exchange Programmes. Unlike in the PRA, the language of instruction may be English. The equivalent of a full academic load at the overseas university must be taken. The courses to be taken overseas are to be agreed with the Programme Director. The marks achieved are converted into equivalent College marks and will count as a thirteenth unit contributing 20% to the final stage three marks.

Further information

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations, and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff, across the very wide range of disciplines taught at Royal Holloway. In general terms, the programmes provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

- the distinctive qualities of the concept of 'Liberal Arts'; these include a grasp of the founding principles and key methods in a range of subject areas and disciplines, and an appreciation of the both the differences and the continuities and commonalities between disciplines.
- the benefits and challenges of comparative approaches to subject areas;
- a range of contemporary critical and theoretical approaches to culture;
- knowledge and understanding relevant to the disciplines chosen by the student.

Skills and other attributes

- critical skills in close reading, including analysis and critical interpretation of text and data;
- the ability to conduct research independently using traditional and electronic resources, and develop habits of reflection on study, reading, learning and research;*
- command of a wide vocabulary and appropriate critical and theoretical terminology;
- planning and execution of essays and project-work, bibliographical skills, developing a reasoned argument;*
- advanced written and oral communication skills, including the ability to present logical and coherent written and oral arguments of varying lengths;*
- experience of learning a modern foreign language;

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- the ability to organise and interpret complex information in a structured and systematic way, and to comprehend and develop sophisticated concepts;*
- the capacity for independent thought and judgement, along with skills in critical reasoning;*
- information technology skills (including word processing, email, WWW, information handling and retrieval), and the ability to engage with the textual use of new media, video, TV, DVD and electronic;*
- interpersonal skills, involving recognising and respecting the viewpoints of others;*
- time management and organisational skills including working to deadlines, prioritising tasks, organising worktime;*
- in addition, this programme fosters the development of a range of personal attributes that are important in the world of work, and that strengthen the graduates' abilities to engage in lifelong learning and contribute to the wider community. These include personal motivation; the ability to work autonomously and with others; self-awareness and self-management; empathy and insight; intellectual integrity; awareness of responsibility as a local, national and international citizen; interest in lifelong learning; flexibility and adaptability; creativity.

* transferable skills

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Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning is mostly by means of lectures, seminars, workshops, essay consultations, and guided independent study. Assessment of knowledge and understanding is typically by formal examinations, coursework, examined essays, translation exercises, oral presentations (both individual and group), exhibits/posters, and the dissertation or long essay. In addition, students may produce various forms of creative work, both individually and in groups. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the Departments.

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Details of the programme structures

A full list of courses available on the degree can be obtained from the Liberal Arts website:

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/mlc/prospectivestudents/liberalarts/baliberalarts.aspx>.

Please note that not all courses run each year, and that not all combinations of courses will be possible due to timetabling constraints. When preferred courses clash, an alternative course will normally have to be selected. Details of courses running in the current academic year can be obtained from the contributing Departments.

Liberal Arts without an International Year or a Language Year Abroad

Stage one:

Students must take the following **mandatory** courses:

LA1000 Liberal Arts 1: Cultural Encounters (1 unit) **[Mandatory, Non-condonable– must be passed in order to progress to the next stage]**

LA1000 must be passed in order to progress to the next stage.

A Language Course at a level suitable to the student (i.e. FR1009, GM1009, SN1001, IT1050 at advanced level or FR1010, GM1010, SN1010, IT1000 at beginners' level), equivalent to 1 unit. **[Mandatory, Condonable]**

and choose options equal to the value of **two** full units from a list of Stage One courses from at least two academic disciplines.

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Stage two:

Students must take the following **mandatory** course:

LA2000 Liberal Arts 2: Power and Dissent (1 unit) [**Mandatory, Non-condonable – must be passed in order to progress to the next stage**]

LA2000 must be passed in order to progress to the next stage.

and choose options equal to the value of **three** units from a list of Stage two courses from at least two academic disciplines.

Stage three:

Students must take the following **mandatory** course:

LA3000 Liberal Arts Dissertation (1 unit) [**Mandatory, Condonable**]

plus choose options equal to the value of **three** full units from a list of Stage three courses.

Liberal Arts with a Language Year Abroad

Stage one:

Students must take the following **mandatory** courses:

LA1000 Liberal Arts 1: Cultural Encounters (1 unit) [**Mandatory, Non-condonable - must be passed in order to progress to the next stage**]

LA1000 must be passed in order to progress to the next stage.

A Language Course at a level suitable to the student (i.e. FR1009, GM1009, SN1001, IT1050 at advanced level or FR1010, or GM1010, SN1010, IT1000 at beginners' level) (1 unit) [**Mandatory, Non-condonable - must be passed in order to progress to the next stage**]

and choose options equal to the value of **two** units from a list of Stage One courses from at least two academic disciplines.

Stage two:

Students must take the following **mandatory** courses:

LA2000 Liberal Arts 2: Power and Dissent (1 unit) [**Mandatory, Non-condonable - must be passed in order to progress to the next stage**]

LA2000 must be passed in order to progress to the next stage.

A Language course at the suitable progression level (i.e. FR2009, GM2009, SN2001, IT2050 at advanced level or FR2010, GM2010, SN2010, IT2000 at post-beginners' level) (1 unit) [**Mandatory, Non-condonable - must be passed in order to progress to the next stage**]

and choose options equal to the value of **two** units from a list of Stage two courses from at least two academic disciplines.

Stage three: (Language Year Abroad)

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Students must take the following:

FR/GM/IT/SN2501 Oral Examination in their chosen language (1 unit) **plus**
either:

FR/GM/IT/SN2201 Work Placement Project (1 unit) **or**
Study Abroad (courses to the equivalent of 1 unit)

Stage four:

Students must take the following **mandatory** courses:

LA3000 Liberal Arts Dissertation (1 unit) [**Mandatory, Condonable**]

A language course at the suitable completion level (i.e. FR3009, GM3009, SN3001, IT3009) (1 unit) [**Mandatory, Non-condonable - must be passed in order to progress to the next stage**]

plus choose options equal to the value of two full units from a list of Stage three courses.

Liberal Arts with an International Year

Stage one:

Students must take the following **mandatory** courses:

LA1000 Liberal Arts 1: Cultural Encounters (1 unit) [**Mandatory, Non-condonable – must be passed in order to progress to the next stage**]

LA1000 must be passed in order to progress to the next stage.

and a Language Course at a level suitable to the student (i.e. FR1009, GM1009, SN1001, IT1050 at advanced level or FR1010, GM1010, SN1010, IT1000 at beginners' level) (1 unit) [**Mandatory, Condonable**]

and choose options equal to the value of **two** units from a list of Stage One courses from at least two academic disciplines.

Stage two:

Students must take the following **mandatory** courses:

LA2000 Liberal Arts 2: Power and Dissent (1 unit) [**Mandatory, Non-condonable – must be passed in order to progress to the next stage**]

LA2000 must be passed in order to progress to the next stage.

and choose options equal to the value of **three** units from a list of Stage two courses from at least two academic disciplines.

Stage three: (International Year)

Study Abroad (courses to the equivalent of 1 unit)

Stage four:

Students must take the following **mandatory** course:

LA3000 Liberal Arts Dissertation (1 unit) [**Mandatory, Condonable**] plus choose options equal to the value of three full units from a list of Stage three courses.

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Progression and award requirements

Students must pass units to the value of at least three units (90 credits) on each stage of the programme.

Students must pass LA1000 (Liberal Arts I: Cultural Encounters) to progress to stage two and LA2000 (Liberal Arts II: Power and Dissent) to progress to stage three. Students taking the Language Year Abroad must pass the language component in each year of study in order to progress. Students are considered for the award and classified on the basis of a weighted average. This is calculated from marks gained in courses taken in stages two and three (or four, if a Language Year Abroad or International Year has been taken), and gives twice the weighting to marks gained in the final stage. In order to qualify for the award, students must gain a weighted average of at least 35%.

If students wish to specify a specialisation in their degree title—e.g. Liberal Arts (History)—they must complete at least 90 credits in their chosen area. 30 of these credits may derive from the Dissertation, so long as it falls within the area of specialisation. They will be advised about specialisation pathways at every stage of their degree but do not need to change degree programme. The specialisation will be awarded, once agreed, as an 'exit award' at the end of the programme.

All first year students on single joint or combined honours programmes offered all or in part by departments or schools in the Faculty of Arts & Social Science are required to pass a Moodle-based writing skills quiz in order to progress into the second year of study. The pass mark for the test is 60%. Certificates of Distinction are awarded to students who achieve at least 80% in the quiz. Students may attempt the quiz as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who meet the requirements for progression as stipulated in the [College's Undergraduate Regulations](#) (Section: Conditions for progression to the next stage) but fail to pass the Moodle based quiz will not be permitted to progress into their second year of academic study at the College.

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Student support and guidance

- **Personal Advisers:** All students are allocated a Personal Adviser who meets with them regularly through the programme. The adviser's role is to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues. Personal Advisers may also advise students on College and University support services, including the Student Counselling Service, the Health Centre and the Disability and Dyslexia Services (ESO) for students with special needs. When a student's usual Personal Adviser has sabbatical leave, the student is re-allocated to another colleague.
- **Instructors and Course Leaders:** All staff available and accessible through dedicated office hours system.
- **Academic Co-ordinator:** The Academic Co-ordinator provides a further, back-up source of academic advice. The Academic co-ordinator liaises as necessary with Personal Advisers and with the other departments contributing to the programme. Matters concerning course options and timetabling are discussed in the first instance with the student's Personal Adviser who may refer these to the Academic Co-ordinator.
- **Language Year Abroad Co-ordinators:** The Year Abroad Co-ordinators, members of academic staff, run briefing sessions for students in Stage 2 of the programme who are going abroad the following year. The Year Abroad Co-ordinators provide help and advice with applications, forms, accommodation plans, interviews, the British Council, and the Erasmus Programme.
- **The Student-Staff Committee:** All years of the undergraduate programme as well teaching staff are represented on this committee, which is chaired by a student. Any student may bring matters of concern before this committee, which, after discussion, will refer them to the appropriate School or College authority for resolution.

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- **The Disability and Dyslexia Network Member:** The Disability and Dyslexia Network Member co-ordinates the provisions made within the School for students with disabilities or special educational needs through liaison with colleagues across the School and elsewhere in College (above all the Disability and Dyslexia office itself).
- **The School of Modern Languages Student Handbook:** This is published online annually and made available to all students via the 'For Students' section of the SMLLC website. It comprises a complete general guide to the School, its various subject areas, and its resources, containing contact details, help available, facilities, advice on study skills, assessment, feedback, plagiarism, Student-Staff Committee, examinations, etc., and information about other sources of support offered by the College. Lists of courses available, with course descriptions, are also available on the SMLLC website.
- **The Liberal Arts Handbook:** This is published online annually and should be read in conjunction with the School of Modern Languages Student Handbook. Both are available to all students via the SMLLC website.
- **Departmental Careers and Employability Tutor:** Whilst the principal role in careers advice is played by the Careers and Employability Service, there is also a Departmental Careers and Employability Lead who works with the Careers and Employability Service to ensure timely dissemination to students of information concerning careers, employers' forums, or other careers events. A number of these, including sessions designed to raise students' awareness of the marketability of the transferable skills acquired during their university careers, are organized on an annual basis specifically for students in the SMLLC.
- **Learning Resources:** The School is situated in the International Building where, along with the Centre for the Development of Academic Skills (CeDAS), it offers students access to computer laboratories with dedicated Computer-Assisted Language Learning Software and recording facilities. The School liaises closely with the College libraries to ensure that the needs of students are appropriately met by the College's extensive collections of books, journals and electronic resources. Foreign-language DVDs can be viewed in the library's viewing rooms.
- **Support Services:** Access to all College and University support services, including Student Counselling Service, Health Centre and the Disability and Dyslexia Services for students with disabilities and Specific Learning Difficulties.

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Admission requirements

The Programme's standard conditional offer is available on the [Course Finder](#) web page. However, the School of Modern Languages, Literatures, and Culture retains considerable flexibility in its admissions and offers policy and strongly encourages applications from non-standard applicants. Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. It may also be helpful to contact the [Admissions Office](#) for specific guidance on the entrance requirements this programme.

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Further learning and career opportunities

Liberal Arts is conceived as a programme producing flexible and adaptable graduates who offer the skills and attitude valued by employers, such as an ability to respond quickly and effectively to shifting business needs and market conditions

As graduates will have studied a wide range of areas at a high level, they will be able to demonstrate a correspondingly broad range of skills, including foreign language skills and the creative, critical and analytical skills encouraged by all departments. Other transferable skills include expert knowledge in a diverse range of fields, a broad contextual and international awareness, an understanding of the methods available both for tackling challenges in the workplace and communicating with different people in different ways.

Likely careers destinations (based on employment data for humanities graduates and graduates of Liberal Arts programmes at other institutions) will include: employment in law; PR and marketing; publishing; international recruitment; civil service; the heritage sector; journalism and broadcast media.

Postgraduate Study in various subject areas will also be possible, and students will be encouraged, when they are planning and researching their dissertation project in the final year, to make contact with departmental advisers to consider appropriate programmes at both PGT and PGR level. For further details please refer to the [Careers & Employability Service](#).

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Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Excellence Framework (REF 2014) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The scoring system for the REF 2014 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour and 3* indicating research that is internationally excellent. 81% of the College's research profile was deemed to be within the 4* or 3* categories, an increase of over 20% since 2008. This result placed Royal Holloway 31st overall in the UK for 4* and 3* research and 33rd based on an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) score. The School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures is ranked 15th in the UK for research of 4* standard and 13th for 3* and 4* research.

Based on 3* and 4* research, the School is ranked 9th in the UK amongst departments of Modern Languages.

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List of programmes

All the programmes are taught by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and lead to awards of the University of London. Programmes in Liberal Arts are not subject to accreditation by a professional body. UCAS codes are given in parentheses (see www.ucas.ac.uk).

Single Honours Degree programmes in Liberal Arts

BA Liberal Arts (Y000)

BA Liberal Arts with a Language Year Abroad (Y001) BA

Liberal Arts with an International Year (Y002)

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