

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes the **Joint Honours Degree programmes in English and History**. This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2015**.

The Joint Degree's principal aim is to allow students to pursue the study of English alongside that of History, and to achieve an understanding of the ways in which the study of one of the disciplines enhances and complements the other. In meeting this principal objective of connecting between the disciplines, the aims of the programme are as follows:

- to enable students to develop independent critical thinking and judgement;
- to provide an attractive, flexible and varied curriculum that draws extensively on the research expertise of staff in the Departments of English and History;
- to engage students imaginatively in the process of critically reading, analysing, and demonstrating knowledge of a range of literary, historical and critical texts;
- to encourage students to appreciate the expressive resources of language;
- to demonstrate a deep understanding of a range of approaches, issues and concepts in both History and English Literature;
- to encourage an awareness of literature's historical context and an appreciation of its continuing social and cultural importance;
- to provide a sound and extensive basis for the study of History and English by meeting the general requirements of the History and English subject benchmarking statements in the development of knowledge and understanding through discipline-specific and generic skills.
- to encourage students to take progressive responsibility for their own study through negotiating subject areas of specialism, via the informed choice of options and the writing of a dissertation or extended essay in their final year, and which in turn provides a firm foundation for postgraduate study and research;
- to develop in students a range of personal attributes relevant to the world beyond higher education: the ability to engage in lifelong learning, to consider ethics and values, and to contribute to the wider community;
- to enable students to acquire and demonstrate transferable skills necessary for successful career development.

Programmes are 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 programmes provide progressive structures in which students are able to gain ever-wider knowledge and understanding, and appropriate skills. The programmes contain a combination of compulsory core courses to introduce students to historical periods and processes, to the principal literary genres, and to contemporary critical and theoretical approaches, with a range of stage two and three specialist options. In each case the structure encourages students, in stage two and three, to develop their own interests through informed choice among specialist options. Whilst the development of fundamental disciplinary-specific skills are emphasised in the 'core' courses, the specialist options provide focused opportunities to examine the application of these skills. In stage three all students on this programme are required to write a dissertation or extended essay in one of the departments.

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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 in the Departments of English and History. In general terms, the joint degree programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

### *Knowledge and understanding*

- English literature from the 9<sup>th</sup> Century to the present day;
- the principal literary genres of fiction, poetry and drama;
- a range of contemporary critical and theoretical approaches to English literature;
- the range of relevant linguistic, literary, cultural and political contexts in which both literature and historical texts are written and read;
- the nature of the relationship between literary and historical forms of knowledge, and an understanding of the historical differences between texts;
- the concepts of historical continuity and change over an extended time span, and across more than one society and culture;
- the broad range of historical issues, events and processes, and the different critical and theoretical approaches that may be employed in understanding or interpreting them;
- the role of key individuals, groups and institutions in initiating and/or influencing important historical issues, events and processes;
- the key sources of evidence and methods of enquiry employed in historical research

### *Skills and other attributes*

The programme is designed to allow students to acquire competence in the following range of discipline-specific and transferable (denoted with an asterisk\*) skills:

- critical skills in close reading, and in the analysis and interpretation of texts and data;
- sensitivity and responsiveness to language and literary form and an understanding of generic conventions;
- the ability to judge and evaluate relevant critical, theoretical and contextual research in the disciplines of English and History;
- the ability to articulate knowledge and the understanding of texts, concepts and theories through the command of a wide vocabulary and via appropriate critical and theoretical terminology;
- the ability to assess the merits and interpret competing theories, explanations and interpretations;
- the ability to conduct literary and historical research independently using both traditional and electronic resources;
- the ability to understand human behaviour in the context of the past;
- bibliographical skills appropriate to the subject including accurate citation of sources and consistent use of conventions in the presentation of scholarly work;
- the ability to develop a logical, planned and reasoned argument through essays and project-work;
- the ability to engage with the textual use of new media, video, TV, DVD and electronic;
- developing habits of critical reflection on reading, learning and of study, learning and research;\*
- listening to, and learning from, constructive feedback and criticism;\*

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- the capacity to analyse and critically examine diverse forms of discourse;\*
- the ability to marshal appropriate evidence in a structured and systematic way;\*
- the capacity for demonstrating independent thought and judgement;\*
- the ability to present written and oral arguments of varying lengths and levels of formality;\*
- Develop the intellectual autonomy and self-direction needed for independent investigation of intellectual problems, taking responsibility for one's learning, and developing habits of reflection on that learning;\*
- information handling and retrieval skills (including the use of online computer searches); identifying, retrieving, sorting, analysing and exchanging information; investigating a wide range of sources;\*
- interpersonal skills, involving the ability to work collaboratively, whilst recognising and respecting the viewpoints of others;\*
- time management and organisational skills including working to deadlines, prioritising tasks, organising work-time.\*

\* transferable skills

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### Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning on the programme draws on the methods and concepts used to conduct scholarship in these two disciplines. It is very strongly informed by the current research interests of the teaching staff from the two departments. This is particularly the case with most 2nd and all 3rd Year options, which are offered by staff based upon their own individual research interests, in a manner which is fully consistent with the College's wider teaching and learning strategy.

The main methods used to develop knowledge and understanding are: formal lectures by academic staff, seminars and tutorials based on a combination of staff-led sessions and student participation (including oral presentations), study groups, and individual consultations and supervisions with appropriate academic staff. There is also the option of guided independent research and study for the final-year dissertation.

Assessment will be by a combination of formal examinations, assessed coursework essays, and online tests and exercises, as indicated in individual Course Specifications. Full details of the assessments for individual course units can be obtained from the [Department of English](#) and the [Department of History](#).

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### Details of the programme structure

The joint degree programme is comprised of equally weighted components in English and History, so that students take a total of two units in each department at each stage of study.

Please note that the list of options offered is subject to change and not all courses run each year. A full list of courses for the current academic year can be obtained from the [Department of English](#) and the [Department of History](#).

### BA English and History

#### Full-time

#### Stage one:

Students must take the following course units:

From the **English** Department, students must take the following:

EN1001 Introduction to Medieval Literature (1 unit)

EN1106 Shakespeare (1 unit)

From the **History** Department, students take the following:

HS1002 History & Meanings I (½ unit)

HS1005 History & Meanings II (½ unit)

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In addition, students choose **one** of the six following full Gateway units (1 unit):

- a) HS1105: Gods, Men and Power: An Introduction to the Ancient World from Homer to Mohammed
- b) HS1107: Republics, Kings and People: The Foundations of European Political Thought from Plato to Rousseau
- c) HS1108: The Rich Tapestry of Life: A Social and Cultural History of Europe 1500-1780
- d) HS1109: Conflict and Identity in the Modern World from 1789 to the Present
- e) HS1113: From Mao to Mandela: Twentieth-Century Political Leaders in the non-Western World
- f) HS1116: Rome to Renaissance: An Introduction to the Middle Ages

### **Stage two:**

Students must take:

From the **English** Department, students choose **one** of the following course units (1 unit):

- a) EN2010 Renaissance Literature
- b) EN2212 Victorian Literature
- c) EN2213 Romantic Literature
- d) EN2324 Debates in Contemporary Literary Theory
- e) EN2325 Modernist Literature

In addition, students choose courses equal to the value of 1 full unit (either 1 full unit or 2 half units) from a list of Stage two courses offered by the English Department.

From the **History** Department, students take:

(i) HS2300: the Independent Research Essay (½ unit).

(ii) Group 1 half-units from the list of course units offered by the History Department to the total value of 1.5 units.

Two of these Group 1 half-units should ordinarily be from the 'term 1' list, and one from the 'term 2' list.

In addition, students on this joint degree programme are expected to 'audit' HS2301 Research Skills, to assist with the writing of their Independent Research Essay. Students will receive no formal credit for auditing this half-unit.

### **Stage three:**

Students must take a total of two units from each Department, and can only take a maximum of one dissertation unit. The English dissertation is free-standing whilst the History dissertation is linked to the Group 3 taught unit.

From the **English** Department, students choose one of the following three Core Options (1 unit):

- a) Special Author Project
- b) Special Topic
- c) Dissertation

In addition students must also choose options equal to the value of one full unit from the list of Stage three courses offered by the English Department.

From the **History** Department, students must take a Group 3 taught course (1 unit), and **either** a Group 3 dissertation unit (1 unit) **or** a Group 2 course (1 unit). Students cannot opt to take a dissertation unit in both departments, but would ordinarily be expected to take a dissertation in History if they have elected not to take a dissertation in English.

Part-time students would normally be expected to take the following:

Year One (Stage One A): EN1001 or EN1106 **and** HS1002 History & Meanings I and HS1005 History & Meanings II

Year Two (Stage One B): EN1001 or EN1106 **and one** of the six History Gateway units listed above

Year Three (Stage Two A): Either one of EN2010/EN2212/EN2213/EN2324/EN2325 or optional courses to the value of 1.0 unit **and** Group 1 half-units from the list of course units offered by the History Department to the total value of unit. Two of these Group 1 half-units should ordinarily be from the 'term 1' list, and one from the 'term 2' list.

Year Four (Stage Two B): Either one of EN2010/EN2212/EN2213/EN2324/EN2325 (if not taken at Stage 2A) or optional courses to the value of 1.0 unit **and** HS2300: the Independent Research Essay plus a

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Group 1 half-unit from the list of course units offered by the History Department. In addition, students on this joint degree programme are expected to 'audit' HS2301 Research Skills, to assist with the writing of their Independent Research Essay. Students will receive no formal credit for auditing this half-unit.

Year Five and Six (Stage Three): An appropriate combination of courses in line with the requirements stated above, normally including a dissertation in either subject or in a Special Author/ Topic course. Should students choose to take a dissertation in History they must complete the associated taught course-unit in the same academic year.

### **BA English and History with an International Year (4 years)**

#### **Stage one:**

As Stage one, listed above.

#### **Stage two:**

As Stage two, listed above.

#### **Stage three, part 1 - Extra-curricular year:\*\***

Students must take courses at an overseas university nominated through the Erasmus or Student Exchange Programmes. 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 Tutor for International Studies in History. The marks achieved are converted into equivalent College marks and count as a thirteenth unit, HS3400. This will contribute 20% to the final stage three marks.

#### **Stage three, part 2 – Final year in the History Department:**

As Stage three, listed above. These courses will contribute 80% to the final stage three marks.

\*\*Students commencing stage three, part 1 on this four year programme will not be permitted to transfer back to one of the three year programmes offered by the Department of History. The Department will give consideration in the case of extreme hardship, documented by extenuating circumstances and supporting material, as it normally would, should a student not be able to complete their year abroad.

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### **Progression and award requirements**

The progression and award requirements are essentially the same across all Honours Degree programmes at Royal Holloway. Students must pass units to the value of at least three units on each stage of the programme. On some programmes there may be a requirement to pass specific courses in order to progress to the next stage or to qualify for a particular degree title (see programme structure above). 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, and gives twice the weighting to marks gained in stage three. In order to qualify for the award, students must gain a weighted average of at least 35%.

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 [SS1000] 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**

- The joint degree programme has a single Programme Director, responsible for the co-ordination and delivery of the programme across the two departments.

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- Personal Tutors: All students are allocated a personal tutor in each department who meets with them regularly through the programme. The tutor's role is to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues. Students meet with their personal tutors two or three times during the first term in small groups. Subsequently, responsibility for meetings is placed on the student. In addition, in both departments all first year students will meet with their personal tutor more formally on a fortnightly basis for tutorials that develop a range of critical, textual and study skills.
- Dedicated Year Tutors are at the centre of the English Department's student support systems, whilst in the History Department the First-Year Tutor and Director for Undergraduate Studies provide appropriate advice and support for all students studying within the department. In both departments a combination of these Year Tutors, Programme Co-ordinators, course leaders, seminar leaders and departmental administrators provide a back-up system of academic, pastoral and welfare advice.
- All tutors and academic staff are available and accessible through dedicated weekly office-hours.
- Week-long induction programme to the Departments and College for orientation at the start of the first year.
- Detailed and comprehensive Departmental Student Handbooks.
- The Departmental Student/Staff Committee in each department acts as a channel of communication between staff and students. Students from each year group are recruited to serve as representatives on each Student/Staff Committee, and each Committee includes at least one dedicated representative from the English and History joint degree programme.
- Extensive supporting material and learning resources available from the College libraries. In addition students also have access to a wide range of resources available through other University of London libraries.
- 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.
- There will be representatives for each year on the English Department Student-Staff Committee.

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### **Admission requirements**

Details of the Department's typical offer for each programme of study is available on the [Course Finder](#) web page. However, the Department also has 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. For further guidance it may be helpful to contact the [Recruitment and Partnerships Office](#).

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### **Further learning and career opportunities**

Graduates from English degree programmes have successfully progressed into a wide range of professions, while some have continued onto Postgraduate studies. For further details please refer to the [Careers and 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 Department of English is ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in the UK for research of 4\* standard and 31<sup>st</sup> for 3\* and 4\* research.

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### **List of programmes**

All the programmes are taught by academic staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and lead to awards of the University of London. Programmes in English and History are not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The QAA subject benchmark statements for English and for History describe the general features which one might expect from Honours Degree programmes in the subject, and can therefore be used as a useful point of reference when reading this document (see [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)). UCAS codes are given in parentheses (see [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)).

### **Joint Honours Degree programme in English and History**

BA English and History (QV31)

BA English and History with and International Year (Banner code 2654)

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