

**Royal Holloway, University of London**  
**Course specification for an undergraduate award**  
**BA Modern and Contemporary History (V140)**

**Section 1 – Introduction to your course**

This course specification is a formal document, which provides a summary of the main features of your course and the learning outcomes that you might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if you take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, and in various handbooks, all of which you will be able to access online. Alternatively, further information on the College's academic regulations and policies can be found [here](#). Further information on the College's Admissions Policy can be found [here](#).

Your degree course in Modern and Contemporary History is delivered in three stages, each of which comprises one year of full-time study during which you must follow modules to the value of 120 credits. The courses are characterised by clear academic and intellectual progression and by opportunities for specialisation throughout, including the possibility of taking modules offered by other History departments within the University of London. The first stage of the course provides both a stimulating general introduction and lays the foundations for later, more specialised, study. In stage two, you explore periods and themes of history in greater depth, with the opportunity to undertake guided independent research or study. In the third stage, you follow modules which closely reflect the research interests of members of staff, and also research and write a 10,000 word dissertation, which is seen as the climax of the stage-by-stage training in research techniques, analysis and presentation.

For joint and combined honours courses, please refer to the course specification for your secondary department's corresponding single honours course for further information on educational aims, and learning outcomes.

While Royal Holloway keeps all the information made available under review, courses and the availability of individual modules, especially optional modules are necessarily subject to change at any time, and you are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect your decision to follow a specific course. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform you as soon as is practicable of any significant changes which might affect your studies.

The following is brief description for some of the most important terminology for understanding the content of this document:

*Degree course* – May also be referred to as 'degree programme' or simply 'programme', these terms refer to the qualification you will be awarded upon successful completion of your studies.

*Module* – May also be referred to as 'course', this refers to the individual units you will study each year to complete your degree course. Undergraduate degrees at Royal Holloway comprise a combination of modules in multiples of 15 credits to the value of 120 credits per year. On some degree courses a certain number of optional modules must be passed for a particular degree title.

Section 2 – Course details			
Date of specification update	March 2022	Location of study	Egham Campus
Course award and title	BA Modern and Contemporary History	Level of study	Undergraduate
Course code	3009	UCAS code	V140
Year of entry	2022/23		
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department	History	Other departments involved in teaching the course	N/A
Mode(s) of attendance	Full-time or part-time	Duration of the course	Three years or six years
Accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirement(s)	N/A		
Link to Coursefinder for further information:	<a href="https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/">https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/</a>	For queries on admissions:	<a href="mailto:study@royalholloway.ac.uk">study@royalholloway.ac.uk</a> .

Section 3 – Degree course structure										
3.1 Mandatory module information										
The following table summarises the mandatory modules which students must take in each year of study										
Year	Module code	Module title	Contact hours*	Self-study hours	Written exams**	Practical assessment**	Coursework**	Credits	FHEQ level	Module status (see below)
1	HS1004	History in the Making	56	244	0%	0%	100%	30	4	MC
2	HS2300	Research Essay / Public History Project	15	135	0	0	100%	15	5	MC
2	HS2045	Concepts in History	20	130	0	20%	80%	15	5	MC
3	HS3003	Dissertation in History	4	296	0	0	100%	30	6	MC

This table sets out the most important information for the mandatory modules on your degree course. These modules are central to achieving your learning outcomes, so they are compulsory, and all students on your degree course will be required to take them. You will be automatically registered for these modules each year. Mandatory modules fall into two categories; 'condonable' or 'non-condonable'.

In the case of mandatory 'non-condonable' (MNC) modules, you must pass the module before you can proceed to the next year of your course, or to successfully graduate with a particular degree title. In the case of mandatory 'condonable' (MC) modules, these must be taken but you can still progress or graduate even if you do not pass them. Please note that although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, changes to your degree course may be made where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events. For example; where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of external advisors, to enhance academic provision.

\*Contact hours come in various different forms, and may take the form of time spent with a member of staff in a lecture or seminar with other students. Contact hours may also be laboratory or, studio-based sessions, project supervision with a member of staff, or discussion through a virtual learning environment (VLE). These contact hours may be with a lecturer or teaching assistant, but they may also be with a technician, or specialist support staff. It is intended that these contact hours will face-to-face as far as possible, but in certain unavoidable situations, these may take place virtually.

\*\*The way in which each module on your degree course is assessed will also vary, however, the assessments listed above are all 'summative', which means you will receive a mark for it which will count towards your overall mark for the module, and potentially your degree classification, depending on your year of study. On successful completion of the module you will gain the credits listed. 'Coursework' might typically include a written assignment, like an essay. Coursework might also include a report, dissertation or portfolio. 'Practical assessments' might include an oral assessment or presentation, or a demonstration of practical skills required for the particular module.

### 3.2 Optional modules

In addition to mandatory modules, there will be a number of optional modules available during the course of your degree. The following table lists a selection of optional modules that are likely to be available. However, not all may be available every year. Although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, new options may be offered or existing ones may be withdrawn. For example; where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of External Advisors, to enhance academic provision. There may be additional requirements around option selection, so it is important that this specification is read alongside your department's Student Handbook, which you can access via their [webpage](#).

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Republics, Kings and People	The Making of the Modern middle East, 1789-1939	Europe 1900: The Shock of the New
Conflict and Identity in Modern Europe, c1770-1990	Awakening China: From the Opium Wars to the Present Day	The Clash of Powers: the United States, China and the Cold War
Mao to Bin Laden – 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Leaders of the non-Western World	From Mutiny to Modi: the Indian Subcontinent from the C19 to the Present	The Age of Thatcher: Politics, identities and Cultures in Britain, c.1970-2000
	Twentieth-Century America	Malcolm X, Islam and Black Protest
	Modern Girls: Women in Twentieth-Century Britain	The Curse of Aid: International Development, 1940-2000
	The Pursuit of Power: The Russian Empire from Reform to Revolution	The History of the Holocaust
		Age of Terror: Terrorism from 1945 to the Present

### 3.3 Optional module requirements

**Year 1**  
All students may substitute up to 30 credits of modern foreign language study for an equivalent number of Foundation units at the rate of 15 credits per term, subject to the approval of the Director of Undergraduate Studies. No student may substitute other modules for more than 30 credits of Foundation study.

Students must **also** take **three** Gateway 30 credit modules:

HS1107: Republics, Kings and People (30 credits)

HS1109: Conflict and Identity in Modern Europe, c. 1770 - 2000 (30 credits)

HS1113: Mao to Mandela: Twentieth-Century Leaders of the non-Western World (30 credits)

The current listing of Gateway modules can be found via the History Department's [webpage](#)

**Year 2**

The mandatory module Research Essay/ Public History Project is attached to the 30-credit Further Subject. Work on the essay takes place in Term One and Term Two.

This degree's focus on the modern world means that you, in your selection of a second year Further Subject module, should choose modules whose coverage lies wholly, or at least predominantly, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (i.e. the post-1800 period), or within the accepted guidelines relating to the subject matter relevant to this degree. Lists of appropriate modules are published at the time that module choices are made. Exceptions to this rule can only be made with the written consent of the Education Lead (History).

**In addition**, you must take four of the 15 credit Survey modules. This degree's focus on the modern world means that you, in your selection of second year Survey modules, should choose modules whose coverage lies wholly, or at least predominantly, within the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (i.e. the post-1800 period), or within the accepted guidelines relating to the subject matter relevant to this degree. Lists of appropriate modules are published at the time that module choices are made. Exceptions to this rule can only be made with the written consent of the Education Lead (History):

In **Term One**, you must ordinarily take two 15 credit 'Survey' modules,

In **Term Two**, you must take two 15 credit Survey modules.

The current listing of 15 credit Survey modules can be found via the History Department's [webpage](#).

You must also take one suitable Further Subject module (30 credits) from the list of Further Subject options.

### **Year 3**

You must take three taught 'Special Subject' modules (90 credits), plus the module HS3003 Dissertation in History (30 credits).

This degree's focus on the modern world means that you, in your selection of third year College-based or intercollegiate Special Subject modules, should choose modules whose coverage lies wholly, or at least predominantly, within the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (i.e. the post-1800 period), or within the accepted guidelines relating to the subject matter relevant to this degree. Lists of appropriate modules are published at the time that module choices are made. Exceptions to this rule can only be made with the written consent of the Education Lead (History).

The current listing of Special Subject 30 credit modules can be found via the History Department's [webpage](#).

N.B. You may also choose a Group 2 **OR** Group 3 paper taught at other Colleges and Schools of the University of London, subject to availability.

## **Section 4 - Progressing through each year of your degree course**

For further information on the progression and award requirements for your degree, please refer to Royal Holloway's [Academic Regulations](#).

All first year students on single, joint or combined honours courses offered all or in part by the School of Humanities, School of Performing and Digital Arts, or department of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy 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.

**Part-time study:**

**Year 1:** HS1004 and a gateway option

**Year 2:** Two gateway options

**Year 3:** Four Survey options (two in each term) (60 credits)

**Year 4:** Further Subject module (both terms, 30 credits), HS2300 Research Essay/ Public History Project (both terms, 15 credits), HS2045 Concepts in History (term two, 15 credits)

**Year 5:** Two 'Modern' Special Subject taught modules (60 credits)

**Year 6:** One 'Modern' Special Subject module (30 credits) **and** the mandatory module HS3003 Dissertation in History (30 credits)

**Modern and Contemporary History with an International Year (4 years)**

**Stage one:**

As Stage one.

**Stage two:**

As Stage two.

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

You must take modules 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 modules to be taken overseas are to be agreed with the Tutor for International Studies in History and Education Lead (History) must accord with the modern emphasis of the degree. The marks achieved are converted into equivalent College marks and count as a thirteenth module, HS3400. This will contribute 20% to the final stage three marks.

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

As Stage three. These modules will contribute 80% to the final stage three marks.

\*\*Students commencing stage three, part 1 on this four year course will not be permitted to transfer back to one of the three year course 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 you not be able to complete their year abroad.

## Section 5 – Educational aims of the course

The aims of this course are:

- to give a sound and extensive basis for the study of modern and contemporary History;
- to provide a flexible and progressive structure in which you are able to gain knowledge, understanding and appropriate skills relating to distinctive research specialisms, which provide a firm foundation for postgraduate study and research;
- to develop in you 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.

**Section 6 - Course learning outcomes**

**In general terms, the courses provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. (Categories – Knowledge and understanding (K), Skills and other attributes (S), and Transferable skills (\*))**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the concepts of continuity and change over an extended time span (centring on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but not exclusively so) and across more than one society and culture <b>(K)</b>;</li> <li>2. the broad range of historical issues and events and the different approaches that may be employed in understanding or interpreting them (to include political thought, political theory, economic policy and economic history as well as history-specific approaches) <b>(K)</b>;</li> <li>3. the complexity and variety of situations, events and past mentalities <b>(K)</b>;</li> <li>4. the diversity of specialisms in the discipline <b>(K)</b>;</li> <li>5. the significance of cultural, social, economic and political factors in initiating and/or influencing important historical issues and events <b>(K)</b>;</li> <li>6. the role of key individuals, groups and institutions in initiating and/or influencing important historical issues and events <b>(K)</b>;</li> <li>7. the key sources of evidence and methods of enquiry employed in historical research <b>(K)</b>;</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. the ability to understand human behaviour in the context of the past <b>(S)</b>;</li> <li>9. gathering, sifting, organising and interpreting evidence and source material <b>(S)</b>;</li> <li>10. interpretation and evaluation of a variety of historical texts and other source materials <b>(S)</b>;</li> <li>11. construction and use of historical databases <b>(S)</b>;</li> <li>12. the use of social sciences theories, drawn from politics, economics and social policy, to extend the analysis and interpretation of historical events <b>(S)</b>;</li> <li>13. research skills needed to plan and execute a project on a defined topic, and produce a coherent, extended piece of written work <b>(S*)</b>;</li> <li>14. independent thought and study <b>(S*)</b>;</li> <li>15. written and oral presentation of arguments and debate <b>(S*)</b>;</li> <li>16. information technology, including word-processing and conducting on-line searches <b>(S*)</b>;</li> <li>17. time-management <b>(S*)</b>;</li> <li>18. ability to work with others and respect their reasoned views <b>(S*)</b>;</li> <li>19. synthesis and critical analysis of information <b>(S*)</b>;</li> <li>20. imaginative insight and the ability to propose creative solutions <b>(S*)</b>.</li> </ol>
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**Section 7 - Teaching, learning and assessment**

Teaching takes place in lectures, large and small seminar groups, and occasionally in one-to-one tutorials. Lectures are primarily used to provide a broad introduction to themes and issues, and to expand your knowledge base (e.g. Foundation and Gateway Modules). Oral presentation skills are developed in small to medium sized groups. The chance to study historical texts occurs throughout the degree, but especially in the third year modules and the dissertation. The dissertation also provides the opportunity for guided independent research. You are introduced to computing skills in the first year introduction to computing modules. As you progress through the course, you develop a greater depth of knowledge and understanding of your skills in general, through your application and interpretation in particular historical and sub-disciplinary contexts.

Assessment of knowledge, understanding and discipline-specific skills is by formal unseen written examinations, coursework essays and other exercises, oral presentations and the independent dissertation. Full details of the assessments for individual modules can be obtained from the [Department](#).

**Section 8 – Additional costs**

There are no single associated costs greater than £50 per item on this degree course.

**These estimated costs relate to studying this particular degree course at Royal Holloway. General costs such as accommodation, food, books and other learning materials and printing etc., have not been included, but further information is available on our website.**

**Section 9 – Indicators of quality and standards**

<b>QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level</b>	4-6
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Your course is designed in accordance with the FHEQ to ensure your qualification is awarded on the basis of nationally established standards of achievement, for both outcomes and attainment. The qualification descriptors within the FHEQ set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of individual qualifications. The qualification descriptors contained in the FHEQ exemplify the outcomes and attributes expected of learning that results in the award of higher education qualifications. These outcomes represent the integration of various learning experiences resulting from designated and coherent courses of study.

<b>QAA Subject benchmark statement(s)</b>	<a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements">http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements</a>
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Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of courses in a specific subject or subject area. They also represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in terms of the attributes and capabilities that those possessing qualifications should have demonstrated.

### Section 10 – Further information

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate when taking full advantage of the learning opportunities that are available. More detailed information on modules, including teaching and learning methods, and methods of assessment, can be found via the online [Module Catalogue](#). The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed regularly by the university, and may also be checked routinely by external agencies, such as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

Your course will be reviewed regularly, both by the university as part of its cyclical quality enhancement processes, and/or by your department, who may wish to make improvements to the curriculum, or in response to resource planning. As such, your course may be revised during the course of your study at Royal Holloway. However, your department will take reasonable steps to consult with students via appropriate channels when considering changes. All continuing students will be routinely informed of any significant changes.

### Section 11 – Intermediate exit awards (where available)

You may be eligible for an intermediate exit award if you complete part of the course as detailed in this document. Any additional criteria (e.g. mandatory modules, credit requirements) for intermediate awards is outlined in the sections below.

Award	Criteria	Awarding body
Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE)	Pass in 210 credits of which at least 90 must be at or above FHEQ Level 4 and at least 120 of which must be at or above FHEQ Level 5	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College
Certificate in Higher Education (CertHE)	Pass in 120 credits of which at least 90 must be at or above FHEQ Level 4	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College

### Section 12 - Associated award(s)

BA Modern and Contemporary History (3009)	
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