

Programme Title: MA in Modern and Contemporary British History



Programme Specification

Awarding Body/Institution	Queen Mary University of London
Teaching Institution	Queen Mary University of London
Name of Final Award and Programme Title	MA in Modern and Contemporary British History
Name of Interim Award(s)	
Duration of Study / Period of Registration	1 (FT) or 2 (PT) years
QM Programme Code / UCAS Code(s)	V1T9, V1T0
QAA Benchmark Group	
FHEQ Level of Award	Level 7
Programme Accredited by	
Date Programme Specification Approved	12 Sep 2014
Responsible School / Institute	School of History

Schools which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme

None

Institution(s) other than Queen Mary that will provide some teaching for the programme

None

Programme Outline

The School of History's long-standing reputation for excellence in the research and teaching of modern and contemporary British history is the basis for this MA programme. It presents students with the opportunity to study this subject from the nineteenth century to the present, covering a wide range of topics and historical approaches. Students develop postgraduate knowledge and understanding of narrative and historiographical debates and of the methods and skills of historical scholarship. They benefit from taking two core modules, one specific to the study of British history, the other to the study of history in general, and two optional modules of their own selection. They also attend a module of postgraduate skills training. Working with staff members, and other postgraduates, they develop and refine their scholarship and skills which have relevance to further postgraduate study or employment. Students progress through their programme of study towards the research and writing of their own piece of advanced, original scholarship: a 15,000-word dissertation based on primary source research.

Aims of the Programme

The subject-specific aims of the MA in Modern and Contemporary British History are (1) to expose students to the narrative of modern and contemporary British history at an advanced level; (2) to encourage them to grasp and engage with the historiography of this subject, and those related to it; and (3) to enable students to employ their knowledge and understanding of narrative and historiography to produce advanced postgraduate research on modern and contemporary British history.

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The subject-specific skills-based aims of the programme are (1) to train students to study, discuss and debate modern and contemporary British history in a postgraduate setting; (2) to encourage students to learn about the research approaches and methods of professional historians and to reflect upon, and develop, their own abilities as modern and contemporary historians; (3) to enable students to think about the utility of the unique range of archives and other forms of repository available to historians of Britain in London; and (4) in particular, through supervision of a postgraduate dissertation, to inspire students to extend their proficiency independently to research and write original history. The programme also aims to facilitate the development of the student's personal and professional skills to ready them for either further academic study or employment.

What Will You Be Expected to Achieve?

On completion of the programme, successful students will have achieved an advanced understanding of the history of modern and contemporary Britain. They will be conversant with classic and up-to-date historical approaches and methods and also the historiographical debates related to this field of study and other fields of historical scholarship. Through the core modules and optional modules, and especially during the research and writing of their dissertation, students will have become well versed in the study of modern and contemporary British history, its advances and its problems. They will also have a full appreciation of, and familiarity with, the sources available for research inside and outside of archives. Through their experience of having been taught on this programme, from their own work as a cohort, and as a result of being part of the research and teaching environment of the School of History and the Faculty, students will have been able to select an original topic for research, design and manage a research project, implement and develop their research skills, and employ and refine their communication skills, orally and in writing. They will also have developed their scholarship, skills and professionalism ready for further postgraduate research or employment.

Academic Content:	
A 1	Knowledge and understanding of the chronological history of modern and contemporary Britain with reference to topic areas from political, social, economic and cultural history and the history of empire, war and international affairs.
A 2	Knowledge and understanding of the historiographical debates surrounding these subjects including but not limited to the history of 'decline' and the nature and process of social and cultural change over time.
A 3	Knowledge and understanding of the different approaches adopted by leading historians of modern and contemporary Britain to their research and writing, the implications of these approaches for their work and for the field as a whole, and the ways in which these are applicable and relevant to their own research interests.
A 4	Knowledge and understanding of the sources available to the historian of modern and contemporary British history, with particular reference to the archival sources available in London.

Disciplinary Skills - able to:	
B 1	Read critically and analyse productively large amounts of challenging textual material.
B 2	Conduct themselves as members of an advanced intellectual environment.
B 3	Cultivate an aptitude to reach independent judgments, convey them to others, and respond to challenges to their own ideas and positions.

Attributes:	
C 1	An ability to make use of individual initiative and enterprise within a partly structured learning environment to organise participation in seminars, preparation for assessed work and independent research.

C2	Demonstration of strong personal time management in preparation for the programme, its seminars and its assessment.
C3	Capability to interact appropriately with academics, non-academic professionals (both within and without the archives sector), and peers in order to contribute to their own personal development and to benefit the programme group as a whole.
C4	Refinement of their use of ICT in the pursuit of their studies, including the use of electronic bibliographical systems and the sharing of documents online.
C5	An ability to make use of hard copy and electronic material, including catalogues and databases, to design, structure and conduct their research.

How Will You Learn?

On this programme, students learn through their work for, and reflection upon, seminars, individual tutorials and independent and group study, especially for their dissertation.

Seminars

On their core and optional modules, students learn through the preparation for, participation in, and reflection upon, weekly two-hour module seminars. Module organisers and teachers provide seminar guidelines, questions and readings in advance (including via the online e-learning environment) and students are required to prepare themselves by analysing those readings and by developing thoughts and responses to the questions (some modules engage the e-learning environment in this process). In seminar, all students are encouraged to participate through varied teaching formats. They are also encouraged to reflect upon their acquisition of knowledge and skills weekly and semesterly. Module organisers recommend that students delve in to the further reading detailed in the module materials, especially in the selection of, preparation for, and writing of coursework assessment.

Individual tutorials

Staff who teach on the MA programme are available to see students in their weekly office hours. Students are encouraged throughout the two teaching semesters, and required during the spring/summer dissertation period, to see their teachers on a regular basis to review their studies, discuss their coursework preparation and completion, and to take advice on career paths beyond their MA studies. The MA Programme Director also sees all students on the programme individually at the beginning of their studies and at appropriate points throughout. Assessment feedback is given to students electronically and also in individual meetings with the core and optional module organisers. Dissertation supervisors read and give feedback on preparatory work and drafts of sections and/or chapters.

Independent and group study

As a measure of the transition from undergraduate to postgraduate studies, students are encouraged by the Programme Director, and especially the core module organisers and skills module organiser, to develop their ability to study independently. The core modules specifically facilitate group work in seminar and in preparation for it, formally and informally. The same is true of the optional modules and also dissertation research. While students research and write their dissertations independently, they benefit and learn from exchanging experience, knowledge and practice informally and formally ahead of, and beyond, the annual MA dissertation colloquium.

How Will You Be Assessed?

Full-time:

Semester 1: the two core modules are each assessed by a 4,000-word coursework essay, both submitted normally in January.
Semester 2: the two optional modules are each assessed by a 4,000-word coursework essay, both submitted normally in April.
The dissertation is a 15,000-word piece of original historical research based on primary-source analysis, set within historiographical foundations. It is submitted normally in September.

Part-time:

Year 1, semester 1: the MAMCBH core module is assessed by a 4,000-word coursework essay, submitted normally in January.
Year 1, semester 2: the optional module is assessed by a 4,000-word coursework essay, submitted normally in April.
Year 2, semester 1: the MA core module is assessed by a 4,000-word coursework essay, submitted normally in January.
Year 2, semester 2: the optional module is assessed by a 4,000-word coursework essay, submitted normally in April.
The MA's dissertation is a 15,000-word piece of original historical research based on primary-source analysis, set within

historiographical foundations.

All students are finally assessed by the MA Examination Board in a meeting normally held in October.

How is the Programme Structured?

Please specify the full time and part time programme diets (if appropriate).

A full-time programme on the MA in Modern and Contemporary British History comprises one year of study including 60 credits of compulsory core modules, 60 credits of optional modules, and 60 credits of dissertation research (a total of 180 credits):

- Semester 1: HST7323 Studying Modern and Contemporary British History (30 credits), and HST7000 History: Approaches, Methods, Challenges (30 credits)
- Semester 2: two optional modules (both 30 credits) selected from a list presented annually by the School of History
- Semester 1 and 2: attendance of the School of History's postgraduate training module (non-credit)
- Spring/summer: independent research and writing, under the guidance of a supervisor, of the MA dissertation (60 credits)

A part-time programme on the MA in Modern and Contemporary British History comprises two years of study including 30 credits of a compulsory core module and 30 credits of an optional module in year one, and the same in year two, and 60 credits of dissertation research (a total of 180 credits):

- Year 1, semester 1: HST7323 Studying Modern and Contemporary British History (30 credits)
- Year 1, semester 2: one optional module from a list presented annually by the School of History (30 credits)
- Year 1, spring/summer: preparatory independent research and writing, under the guidance of a supervisor, of the MA dissertation (towards 60 credits on submission a year hence)
- Year 2, semester 1: HST7000 History: Approaches, Methods, Challenges (30 credits)
- Year 2, semester 2: one optional module from a list presented annually by the School of History (30 credits)
- Year 2, spring/summer: independent research and writing, under the guidance of a supervisor, of the MA dissertation (60 credits)
- Years 1 and 2: attendance of the School of History's postgraduate training module on a part-time basis (non-credit)

Academic Year of Study FT - Year 1

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
History: Approaches, Methods, Challenges	HST7000	30	7	Core	1	Semester 1
Studying Modern and Contemporary British History	HST7323	30	7	Core	1	Semester 1
Britain and the Middle East, 1900-1960	HST7300	30	7	Elective	1	Semester 2 normal
The US-UK Special Relationship	HST7313	30	7	Elective	1	Semester 2
Victors to Victims: Representing the Two World Wars in Britain	HST7315	30	7	Elective	1	Semester 2 normal
Stoicism and Sensibility: Emotions in Modern Britain	HST7328	30	7	Elective	1	Semester 2 normal

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Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
Modern Girls? Gender, Culture and Society in Modern Britain, c.1918-1979	HST7329	30	7	Elective	1	Semester 2
Dancehalls, Dictators and the Dole: British Politics in the 1930s	HST7332	30	7	Elective	1	Semester 2
Unfinished Revolution: Democracy in Britain and America, 1828-1928	HST7334	30	7	Elective	1	Semester 2 normal

What Are the Entry Requirements?

Every application to join the MA in Modern and Contemporary British History will be assessed on its merits. We normally require a first or upper second class honours degree in history or another humanities-related subject. A recognised equivalent from an accredited international institution or an equivalent professional qualification is also accepted. Applications from mature and non-traditional students are welcomed and will be reviewed by an academic selector. Our language requirement for students whose first language is not English is normally a 7.0 IELTS score or equivalent.

How Do We Listen and Act on Your Feedback?

The Staff-Student Liaison Committee provides a formal means of communication and discussion between schools/institutes and its students. The committee consists of student representatives from each year in the school/institute together with appropriate representation from staff within the school/institute. It is designed to respond to the needs of students, as well as act as a forum for discussing programme and module developments. Staff-Student Liaison Committees meet regularly throughout the year.

Each school/institute operates a Learning and Teaching Committee, or equivalent, which advises the School/Institute Director of Taught Programmes on all matters relating to the delivery of taught programmes at school level including monitoring the application of relevant QM policies and reviewing all proposals for module and programme approval and amendment before submission to Taught Programmes Board. Student views are incorporated in the committee's work in a number of ways, such as through student membership, or consideration of student surveys.

All schools/institutes operate an Annual Programme Review of their taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision. APR is a continuous process of reflection and action planning which is owned by those responsible for programme delivery; the main document of reference for this process is the Taught Programmes Action Plan (TPAP) which is the summary of the school/institute's work throughout the year to monitor academic standards and to improve the student experience. Students' views are considered in this process through analysis of the NSS and module evaluations.

Academic Support

All students on the programme participate in a series of welcome week activities at Queen Mary, which involve introductions to the programme, its Director, the School of History, the Faculty, and the University, as well as specific inductions in the use of the online learning environment and other learning resources. Students also meet the administrative staff from the School, especially the Postgraduate Taught and Research Programmes Assessment Manager. Welcome week events include opportunities for social interaction with other lecturers on the MA programmes and with other postgraduate students.

Each student is given a personal adviser who is normally the Programme Director. He/she is someone with whom they can raise issues and problems confidentially and from whom they can seek advice and guidance.

Each student's academic progress and personal welfare is monitored by the Programme Director in conjunction with the module organisers, the Postgraduate Taught and Research Programmes Assessment Manager, and where necessary, the School's

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Director of MA Programmes and the Head of School.

Support is provided within each module by the module organiser and teacher. The research and writing of the dissertation is supported by the student's supervisor and, if required or necessary, the Programme Director and/or the organiser of the School of History's postgraduate skills module.

Assessment feedback is provided electronically and orally after marking of the module coursework. During research for the dissertation, students receive feedback from their supervisor at agreed intervals. They also present their work and receive feedback on it from staff and fellow students at an annual MA colloquium.

All teaching staff hold regular office hours in which students are actively encouraged to discuss their work and their progress.

There is a dedicated Student Experience Manager in the School who works with academic staff to assist students in need of support.

Both the Student Experience Manager and all staff are able to refer students, where appropriate, to the relevant professional service departments in the University, including Disability and Dyslexia, Welfare, and Counselling.

The E-Strategy Manager supports staff and students in their use of online learning environments used on all modules.

Programme-specific Rules and Facts

The MA in Modern and Contemporary British History complies with the School of History postgraduate regulations and degree classification details.

Specific Support for Disabled Students

Queen Mary has a central Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) that offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues. The DDS supports all Queen Mary students: full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international at all campuses and all sites.

Students can access advice, guidance and support in the following areas:

- Finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia
- Applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Arranging DSA assessments of need
- Special arrangements in examinations
- Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders)
- Specialist one-to-one study skills tuition
- Ensuring access to course materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille)
- Providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants)
- Access to specialist mentoring support for students with mental health issues and Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

Links With Employers, Placement Opportunities and Transferable Skills

Students who graduate from the MA in Modern and Contemporary British History can expect to have developed transferable skills with relevance to further academic research and/or employment outside of academia:

1. Intellectual development: students will have acquired and applied knowledge and understanding of a challenging subject matter at an advanced academic level.

2. Research capacity and professional abilities: students will have developed and refined their approach to, and use of, varied sources of information through the identification and then interpretation of historical materials. They will have extended their abilities to evaluate critically the reliability of information and make evidence-based decisions and think creatively about their knowledge and understanding to design, manage and complete their own research projects.

3. Information expertise: students will have engaged with an academic subject which employs bibliographic and digital sources of information at an advanced level. They will be used to responding to, assessing and evaluating information provided for them and also to identify and source information, for their own use and for that of their colleagues. They will have made use of information and communication technologies used by professional academics and researchers and learned to present material on the page and digitally.

4. Communication skills: students will have had opportunity to extend and improve their abilities to communicate their ideas in one-to-one and group settings, orally, electronically and on paper. They will have learned to present themselves and their work professionally, to accept and give criticism positively, and to speak and write with clarity and force of argument to high professional standards.

These skills give graduates from the MA in Modern and Contemporary British History preparation for a wide range of careers, including those in academia, civil service, government, industry, journalism, law, media and teaching. Graduates from the programme have gained employment in the public and the private sector, and benefited from the links that Queen Mary University of London has had with employers in government and industry.

Programme Specification Approval

Person completing Programme Specification

Dr James Ellison

Person responsible for management of programme

Dr Dan Todman

**Date Programme Specification produced/amended
by School Learning and Teaching Committee**

12 Sep 2014

**Date Programme Specification approved by
Taught Programmes Board**