We use cookies to ensure that we deliver the best user experience of our website. If you would like to, you can change your cookie settings at any time. Continue

MA Social Research (African Studies)

This is a research programme that focuses on contemporary Africa. It provides you with an understanding of major social, cultural, political and economic developments and provides you with the research training necessary to undertake a social-science based study of contemporary Africa which will enhance your ability to prepare and present to an audience on material you have researched.

Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham has been awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14 (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx)

Course fact file

Type of Course: Taught

Study Options: Full time

Duration: 12 months

Start date: September

Related courses

Modules - Caribbean Literature MRes (/postgraduate/courses/combined/cwas/caribbean-literature-modules.aspx)

MA/Diploma African Studies (/postgraduate/courses/taught/cwas/african-studies.aspx)

MRes African Studies (/postgraduate/courses/combined/cwas/african-studies.aspx)

Contact

The Postgraduate Admissions Tutor
Tel: +44 (0)121 414 5128
Email: **dasa@contacts.bham.ac.uk (mailto:dasa@contacts.bham.ac.uk)**

Department of African Studies and Anthropology (/schools/historycultures/departments/dasa/index.aspx)

Details

You will study these modules (full descriptions available below):

- Advanced Perspectives on Africa
- Research Skills and Methods in African Studies
- Introduction to Social Research
- Basic Qualitative Research Methods
- Basic Quantitative Research Methods
- Principles of Social Science Research Methods

You will also complete a 15,000-word dissertation.

The MA Social Research (African Studies) fulfils the requirements for the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and successful completion of the course is likely to increase your chances of obtaining ESRC funding for PhD research.

Modules

You will study the following modules:

Advanced Perspectives on Africa

This module deals with areas of concern and debate in contemporary sub-Saharan Africa. It is hinged around the concept of the 'postcolony' (and the literature concerning it) and its relationship to evolving political cultures and ideas about and/or exemplary instances of articulations in the public sphere. You will be asked to adopt an interdisciplinary approach to your guided and independent reading, then to identify and develop case studies of especial interest to you and to research these in the relevant literatures. The module will make featured use of research in and resources drawn from the Internet so as to explore areas of concern and debate in the

immediately contemporary context of 'breaking news.'

Research Skills and Methods in African Studies

This module is a practical hands-on introduction to research methods which takes you through the process of defining a research topic; identifying and accessing sources, including archival and electronic sources; compiling a bibliography; producing an overview of existing work on the topic; designing a project; establishing a timetable; gaining research permission; the ethics of research; planning and executing fieldwork; using interviews and surveys; using photography, sound and video recording; keeping field notes; archival research; assessing and analysing findings; and writing up.

Introduction to Social Research

This module provides a general introduction to studying research and methods, and to preparing for a dissertation. It emphasises key skills such as searching literature, finding existing datasets, referencing, taking notes, reading and presenting a table of numbers, presenting an argument, and criticising an argument. It continues with consideration of generic issues for research, such as the main principles of ethics for applied empirical research, negotiating access to research sites, the role of theory, the philosophical bases for understanding the social world, and synthesising existing research through focus on the findings rather than the conclusions.

Basic Qualitative Research Methods
Basic Quantitative Research Methods
Principles of Social Science Research Methods

Fees and funding

We charge an annual tuition fee. Fees for 2015/16 are as follows:

- Home / EU: £6,210 full-time
- Overseas: £13,665 full-time

For part-time students, the above fee quoted is for year one only and tuition fees will also be payable in year two of your programme.

Eligibility for Home/EU or Overseas fees can be verified with Admissions. Learn more about **fees for international students (/International/students/finance/fees.aspx)** .

Tuition fees can either be paid in full or by instalments. Learn more about **postgraduate tuition fees and funding (/postgraduate/pgt-fees/index.aspx)** .

Scholarships and studentships

Scholarships to cover fees and/or maintenance costs may be available. To discover whether you are eligible for any award across the University, and to start your funding application, please visit the University's **Postgraduate Funding Database (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/funding/FundingFilter.aspx)** .

International students can often gain funding through overseas research scholarships, Commonwealth scholarships or their home government.

University of Birmingham graduates may be entitled to a fee reduction through the **College of Arts and Law Alumni Bursary scheme (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/calgs/scholarships/alumni-bursary.aspx)** .

Entry requirements

MA programmes normally require an upper second-class Honours degree or equivalent with some background in the disciplines to be studied. Applicants with a background in other disciplines, or with less traditional qualifications, may be accepted for the Diploma in African Studies

Learn more about **entry requirements (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/pg/requirements)**

Scholarships and studentships

Scholarships to cover fees and/or maintenance costs may be available. To discover whether you are eligible for any award across the University, and to start your funding application, please visit the University's **Postgraduate Funding Database (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/funding/FundingFilter.aspx)** .

International students can often gain funding through overseas research scholarships, Commonwealth scholarships or their home government.

University of Birmingham graduates may be entitled to a fee reduction through the **College of Arts and Law Alumni Bursary scheme (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/calgs/scholarships/alumni-bursary.aspx)** .

How to apply

Before you make your application

You may wish to **register your interest with us (#contensis)** to receive regular news and updates on postgraduate life within this Department and the wider University.

Making your application

When clicking on the Apply Now button you will be directed to an application specifically designed for the programme you wish to apply for where you will create an account with the University application system and submit your application and supporting documents online. Further information regarding how to apply online can be found on the **How to apply pages (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx)**

Apply now (https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/CAL081.htm)

Learning and teaching

The **Department of African Studies and Anthropology (/schools/historycultures/departments/dasa/index.aspx)** (incorporating the Centre for West African Studies) is a friendly, well integrated community. Staff and postgraduate students work together closely and discuss their research interests at regular meetings. There is also a regular programme of formal DASA seminars at which staff, postgraduate students and visiting scholars present papers and discuss their work-in-progress.

You will also become part of, and contribute to, the vibrant international community of the College of Arts and Law Graduate School, which offers dedicated research resources and a supportive working environment. Our team of academic and operational staff are on hand to offer support and advice to all postgraduate students within the College.

Support with academic writing

As a postgraduate student in the College of Arts and Law, you have access to the **Academic Writing Advisory Service (AWAS) (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/artslaw/student-experience/opportunities/awas/index.aspx)** which aims to help your transition from undergraduate to taught Masters level, or back into academia after time away. The service offers guidance on writing assignments and dissertations for your MA/MSc programme with individual support from an academic writing advisor via tutorials, email and the provision of online materials.

International students can access support through the **English for International Students Unit (EISU) (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/eisu/insessional/index.aspx)** .

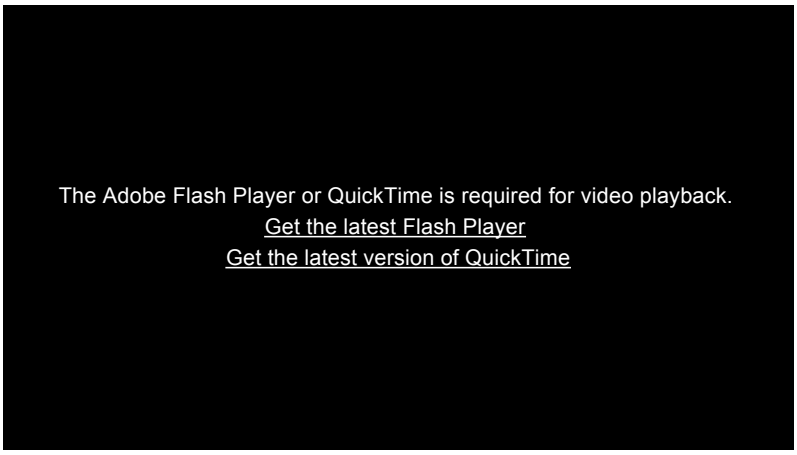
Related staff

Dr Reginald Cline-Cole (/staff/profiles/dasa/cline-cole-reg.aspx)

Employability

The University of Birmingham has been ranked 8th in the UK and 60th in the world for post-qualification employability in the latest global survey of universities commissioned by the International Herald Tribune.

Your degree will provide excellent preparation for employment and this will be further enhanced by the employability skills training offered through the College of Arts and Law Graduate School.



Our African Studies graduates develop a range of skills, including oral and written communication, analysis and evaluation, problem solving, independent working and research skills, which can be used in a variety of occupations. A snapshot of graduate destinations over a five-year period has identified a variety of career paths, from architecture, to lecturing, to paid research. Historically, over 91% of African Studies students have been in employment or further study within six months of graduating.

© University of Birmingham 2014