

Military History MA by distance learning

This two-year distance learning programme offers you the opportunity to explore military history, drawing in particular on Birmingham's expertise in the history of the two world wars and air power. Subjects to be studied include command and leadership; tactics, operations and the use of technology; ethics and war; and the individual's experience of war. You will complete the MA with a 15,000-word dissertation on a topic of your choice.

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

Study Options: Distance learning, part time

Duration: 24 months part-time

Start date: September

Related courses

[MA British First World War Studies \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/history/british-ww1-studies.aspx\)](/postgraduate/courses/taught/history/british-ww1-studies.aspx)

[MA Air Power: History, Theory and Practice \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/history/air-power.aspx\)](/postgraduate/courses/taught/history/air-power.aspx)

[World War I: Aviation Comes of Age \(/postgraduate/courses/moocs/aviation.aspx\)](/postgraduate/courses/moocs/aviation.aspx)

[History MA by distance learning \(/postgraduate/courses/distance/history/history.aspx\)](/postgraduate/courses/distance/history/history.aspx)

[MA History of Warfare \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/history/history-of-warfare.aspx\)](/postgraduate/courses/taught/history/history-of-warfare.aspx)

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[School of History and Cultures \(/schools/historycultures/index.aspx\)](/schools/historycultures/index.aspx)

[Centre for War Studies \(/research/activity/warstudies/index.aspx\)](/research/activity/warstudies/index.aspx)

[College of Arts and Law Graduate School \(/schools/calgs/index.aspx\)](/schools/calgs/index.aspx)

[Centre for War Studies \(/research/activity/warstudies/index.aspx\)](/research/activity/warstudies/index.aspx)

[Department of History \(/schools/historycultures/departments/history/index.aspx\)](/schools/historycultures/departments/history/index.aspx)

Details

From the walls of Troy to the streets of Sangin, warfare has been at the centre of human life and death. He who knows nothing of war can understand neither the past nor the present, for, as Trotsky famously said, 'war is the locomotive of history'. Modern military history does more than re-fight old battles, however. It can, for example, teach us much about the cultures and societies that find themselves at war, and indeed about the souls of the men and women who do the fighting.

This course will stimulate and challenge you to think about the history of warfare in all its aspects, building a skill set over two years of part-time study which will equip you for further research in the field and/or broaden and deepen your understanding of the cruel, complex but endlessly fascinating phenomenon that is war.

To gain a Masters degree you will need to complete 180 credits. You will study six core modules (full descriptions available below):

- Tactics and Operational Art
- Command and Leadership in War
- Ethics of War
- Experience of War
- Research Skills: Methodology and Sources
- Research Skills: Dissertation Preparation

Each module is worth 20 credits and assessed by an essay of not more than 4,000 words. You will complete the programme with a 15,000-word dissertation worth 60 credits. Your dissertation will be based on a substantial and sustained investigation of an historical problem – of your choice – relating to military history, undertaken in the light of current knowledge and after an analysis of available primary material. You will receive one-to-one advice and supervision from an expert in your chosen field.

Why study this course

The University of Birmingham is an acknowledged leader worldwide in military history, with particular strengths in the two world wars and air power studies. You will be taught by experts in the field who, through our several long-standing and successful part-time MA programmes, are well equipped to understand the unique challenges students like you face. The main advantage of studying this programme by distance learning is flexibility. You can study at home, in your own time and at your own pace, so you can combine achieving a qualification with work or family commitments. Although you are welcome to join in the vibrant events programme of the Centre for War Studies, there is no requirement to attend the campus at any stage.

Career changing

A qualification from the University of Birmingham can be the springboard to promotion with your current employer, the platform from which to launch a new career or simply a way to become more effective in your current role.

Studying by distance learning has the benefit of allowing you to develop your career without having to leave employment. It also means that you can apply new knowledge and insights to your working life while you are still studying; many students choose to tackle work-related topics in their dissertations.

Studying at the University of Birmingham is a rewarding and enriching experience that brings about significant personal development.

Support

Although self-study is central to doing a programme, distance learning support is always available from tutors at the University. Our programmes are designed to keep you in touch with fellow students and tutors. The 'virtual learning environment' provides a focal point and helps provide a structure for your learning.

Materials

Our study materials are produced by academic staff in the specialist areas and are available online through the University's 'virtual learning environment'. They contain aims and objectives, reading lists, summaries of readings, activities and commentaries, discussion and reflection tasks, indexes and details of assignments required. On joining, you are provided with a handbook that introduces you to the team, provides details of their roles and expertise and gives all the contact information you will need including email addresses so that if you have any difficulties or questions you will know who to contact for help and guidance.

Personal tutors

You will be assigned a personal tutor. Personal tutors are available to answer questions regarding the content of your programme, and also to give advice and provide clarification if you don't understand something, for example what an assignment question demands.

Modules

In addition to your dissertation, you will study six core modules:

Tactics and Operational Art

The module will introduce you to how technological and conceptual change has driven the development of tactics and operational art since the 1500s, examining how armies from different cultural backgrounds have managed these issues and the relationship between innovation and military success. A series of case studies will focus on key examples of tactics and operational art in warfare.

Command and Leadership in War

Questions of command and leadership are central to the history of warfare. The module will introduce you to the evolution of command styles and the role of the leader over time, assessing the importance of the individual's contribution to military history and placing this in the context of broader structural change. A series of case-studies will focus on key debates about command and leadership in wartime.

Ethics of War

The module will introduce you to concepts of *Ius ad Bellum* and *Ius in Bello* ("justice of war" and "justice in war") and explore how they have been applied in various conflicts over time, addressing issues such as proportionality and the status of non-combatants. It will analyse attempts to impose legal, ethical and moral constraints on warfare and the successes and failures of these attempts.

Experience of War

The module will introduce you to 'war from the bottom up': how individuals have experienced warfare. It will analyse coping strategies, the construction and maintenance of morale both military and civilian and explore why these have sometimes broken down. Finally, it will introduce you to individuals' response to war as expressed in art, from poetry to moving pictures.

Research Skills: Methodology and Sources

The module will introduce you to the historiography of warfare as well as to a variety of different research methodologies and research sources. A series of case-studies will focus on key research sources (published and unpublished) for the experience of war, including: official histories; the diaries, memoirs, letters and autobiographies of contemporary actors; archival sources, including the National Archives of the United Kingdom; as well as non-documentary kinds of evidence.

Research Skills: Dissertation Preparation

This module will also equip you with the skills necessary to both plan and undertake a specialist piece of research at Masters level. It will provide detailed guidance on the techniques necessary for the location of primary and secondary sources relevant to your dissertation research. You will become familiar with advanced bibliographical aids and with how to search in relevant libraries, archives and data sources. You will also undertake a detailed analytical survey of the secondary literature relevant to your dissertation topic.

Fees and funding

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

- Home/EU: £3,105 part-time
- Overseas: £7,070 part-time

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

Tuition fees can either be paid in full or by instalments.

Eligibility for Home/EU or Overseas fees can be verified with Admissions. Learn more about [fees for international students](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/students/finance/fees.aspx) (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/students/finance/fees.aspx>).

Learn more about [postgraduate tuition fees and funding](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/pgt-fees/index.aspx) (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/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) (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/funding/FundingFilter.aspx>).

Entry requirements

A good Honours degree in History or an equivalent discipline. Other professional experience or qualifications comparable to degree standard will also be considered. Examples might include law, accountancy, management, or published work in a relevant field. Every submission is considered on its own merits.

Learn more about [entry requirements \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/index.aspx)

How to apply

Before you make your application

You may wish to [register your interest with us \(https://bham.hobsons.co.uk/emtinterestpage.aspx?ip=postgraduate\)](https://bham.hobsons.co.uk/emtinterestpage.aspx?ip=postgraduate) 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 \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx)

[Apply now \(https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/CAL144.htm\)](https://pga.bham.ac.uk/lpages/CAL144.htm)

Related news and events

[Birmingham teams up with BBC to offer online WW1 course \(/research/activity/warstudies/news/2014/bbc-mooc.aspx\)](/research/activity/warstudies/news/2014/bbc-mooc.aspx)

Learning and teaching

This programme is delivered through our [Centre for War Studies \(/research/activity/warstudies/index.aspx\)](/research/activity/warstudies/index.aspx), so you'll be taught by academics who are experts in their field.

Although much of the course is delivered through our 'virtual learning environment,' support is always available. You will have a personal tutor and dissertation supervisor to guide you and answer any questions, and you have access to a wide range of online resources too.

You also have the opportunity to meet other students and academic staff through online chats and discussion forums.

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 \(AWAS\) \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/artslaw/student-experience/opportunities/awas/index.aspx\)](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 \(EISU\) \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/eisu/insessional/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/eisu/insessional/index.aspx).

Related research

- [Centre for War Studies \(/research/activity/warstudies/index.aspx\)](/research/activity/warstudies/index.aspx)

Related staff

[Dr Jonathan Boff \(/staff/profiles/history/boff-jonathan.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/history/boff-jonathan.aspx)

[Dr Peter Gray \(/staff/profiles/history/gray-peter.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/history/gray-peter.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.

Historically, over 92% of our History students have been in employment or further study within six months of graduating.

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