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MA Social Research (Economic and Social History)

This programme provides research training that will prepare you to undertake research in the field of economic and social history. Its particularly useful if you want to convert to the study of economic and social history, or if you have already studied in this area and wish to improve your skills. It is recognised by the Economic and Social Research Council as providing the requisite research training for a PhD so you can apply for funding for the MA to be the first (training) year of a four-year PhD.

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: 1 year full-time

Start date: September

Contact

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Email: **j.l.greaves@bham.ac.uk (mailto:j.l.greaves@bham.ac.uk)**

Details

This programme provides research training that will prepare you to undertake research in the field of economic and social history.

You will study five core modules (full descriptions available below):

- Introduction to Social Research
- Research Design
- Social Research Methods I
- Social Research Methods II
- Historical Methods

Many of the core modules are delivered at a wider level, so you will study with students from the School of Social Sciences as well as those from the Department of Modern History.

You will then choose one of the following options:

- Medieval Studies: Theories and Practices
- Early Modern Research: Theories and Practices
- 20th Century Britain

You will also complete a 15,000 word dissertation.

Modules

You will study five core modules:

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.

Research Design

This introduces you to the concepts and varieties of social science research designs. A key aim is to explain that design is independent of, and so does not entail,

methods of data collection and analysis. Our intention is to link the introductory module to the modules on data collection and analysis through consideration of research questions and warranting practices.

Social Research Methods I

This module introduces you to the principles and practice of data collection, collation and analysis. Teaching and learning exercises demonstrate the value of research skills in relation to both textual and numeric data. The module develops understanding of different stages of the research process. The importance of ethical practice in research development, collection, collation, analysis and dissemination is stressed throughout.

Social Research Methods II

The module builds on Social Research Methods I.

Two large-scale studies (research materials, datasets) are employed to build research skills. Secondary research skills (using textual and numeric data) are explicitly explored as a base from which to conduct informed and appropriate data handling/analysis. An introduction to multivariate analysis will be provided, up to the level of multiple regression and analysis of variance. Techniques for analysing textual data will also be covered.

Historical Methods

This introduces you to the major intellectual debates in the development of the subject: e.g., history 'from below'; the Annales school; Marxist approaches; gender; the new cultural history, etc. You will be introduced to some of the major schools of, or tendencies in, historical research; in turn the Annales School, the English historians response to Marxism, cultural history, the linguistic turn, gender, history of science and critical social theory (Geertz and Foucault). The focus is on the application of the ideas to historical practice then and now.

You will then choose one of the following optional modules:

Medieval Studies Research: Theories and Practices

This enables you to understand and discuss current theoretical positions adopted by medievalists from a variety of disciplines and also to understand and discuss how these theories and methodologies offer different approaches to reading and interpreting materials from the past. In the seminars you discuss selected theorised writing on medieval studies and ways of interpreting medieval primary sources.

Early Modern Research: Theories and Practices

This enables you to explore the frameworks for historical research, c. 1400-1650, focussing on interpretations and sources peculiar to the early modern period, in particular early modern printed texts. The inter-disciplinary nature of this makes it suitable as an introduction to the skills needed to read texts written in the particular religious climate of the period while it broad base ensures exposure to many aspect of early modern culture, for example material culture.

20th Century Britain

This focuses on the different approaches to 20th Century British History and includes such topics as: states and nations; class and social structure; economy and finance; the market and society and gender. Broad introductory classes on each of these subjects are then followed by specific analyses of either a conceptual problem or an issue concerning a primary source. It introduces you to a variety of methodological approaches to the study of 20th century British history, the key historiographical debates concerning, problems and issues concerning sources.

Fees and funding

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

- Home / EU: £6,210 full-time; £3,105 part-time
- Overseas: £14,140 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 (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/students/finance/fees.aspx)**

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

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

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

International students

Academic requirements

We accept a range of qualifications; our **country pages (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/country/index.aspx)** show you what qualifications we accept from your country.

English language requirements

You can satisfy our English language requirements in two ways:

- by holding an **English language qualification (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/international/index.aspx)** to the right level
- by taking and successfully completing one of our **English courses for international students (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-**

pg/international/english-courses.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)** 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/CAL071.htm)

Related news and events

NGOs - the changing face of grassroots activism (/research/our/news/items/ngo.aspx)

Learning and teaching

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

Professor Gavin Schaffer (/staff/profiles/history/schaffer-gavin.aspx)

Dr Armin Grünbacher (/staff/profiles/history/gruenbacher-armin.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.

Birmingham's History graduates develop a broad range of transferable skills that are highly valued by a range of employers. These skills include: familiarity with research methods; the ability to manage large quantities of information from diverse sources; the ability to organise information in a logical and coherent manner; the expertise to write clearly and concisely and to tight deadlines; critical and analytical ability; the capacity for argument, debate and speculation; and the ability to base conclusions on statistical research.

Over the past five years, over 92% of History postgraduates were in work and/or further study six months after graduation. Some of our History postgraduates go on to use their studies directly, for example in heritage, museum or archivist work. Others use their transferable skills in a range of occupations from finance to civil service to fundraising. Employers that graduates have gone on to work for include: Alcester Heritage Network; HSBC; KPMG; Ministry of Defence; and the National Trust.

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