# Patrizia Lissoni

For a long time I wanted to undertake doctoral studies, both for self-interest and personal passion, and as an opportunity to advance in my professional career.

However, as a visiting instructor in a small American university, teaching language courses, I was also mindful that I didn't want to leave this teaching position for three or four years, knowing that it gives me a lot of satisfaction, and that returning would be very challenging. When, last summer, I discovered on the internet that the **Department of Modern Languages (/schools/lcahm/departments/languages/index.aspx)** at the University of Birmingham offers a PhD in Italian Studies by Distance Learning, I immediately felt that this was the solution I was looking for. The University website is very well organized and clear, and I was able to find detailed information about the Distance Learning programme, the Department of Modern Languages and the current research being undertaken by lecturers and students. This information was important to me when assessing the value of the course.

I started a PhD in 2013 and have recently returned from my first visit to the University, during which I had many meetings and took part in research training with my supervisor and other lecturers in the Department of Modern Languages. I was greatly impressed by the attention to detail shown by all at the University, not least the administrative and library staff who, with their suggestions, made sure that my visit was extremely productive as well as enjoyable.

I could not be happier with the choice I have made. Even in my relatively short visit I was able to make the most of all the resources that are available, and continue to be impressed by the high academic professionalism of the lecturers who are part of the **PhD by Distance Learning (/schools/calgs/distancelearning/dl-phd.aspx)** programme.



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