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BA Economic and Social History

Studying Economic and Social History offers you the chance to develop your historical understanding across either or both of the medieval and modern periods, as well as enhance your social scientific skills to support your appreciation of the past.

Our focus is on understanding why economies and societies have developed in the way that they have and what the implications of that development have been: for example, we examine what makes countries rich and powerful and how international economic relationships have developed; we consider how living standards, employment, family structure and social policy have evolved; and we focus on how life has changed for 'ordinary' people.

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

UCAS code: V300

Duration: 3 years

Places Available: 10

Applications in 2012: 111

Typical Offer: ABB (**More detailed entry requirements and the international qualifications accepted can be found in the course details (?OpenSection=EntryRequirements)**)

Start date: September

Contact

Admissions Tutor:
Dr Simon Yarrow

Telephone enquiries:
+44 (0)121 41 45752

Email: **historycultures-ug@contacts.bham.ac.uk (mailto:historycultures-ug@contacts.bham.ac.uk)**

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

Details

BA History Open Day talk September 2013

The Adobe Flash Player or QuickTime is required for video playback.
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- Download the **programme brochure (/Documents/college-artslaw/history/v300.pdf)** for BA Economic and Social History to find out more about the course structure

What makes economies grow? Why are wealth and income unequally distributed? Are market economies or controlled economies more successful? What is the relationship between education, health and prosperity? How have ordinary people's lives been affected by changes in family size? Is it possible to maintain economic progress without a manufacturing sector? Economic and Social History explores questions like these.

Economic and Social History is taught within the Department of History, which has an outstanding international reputation for excellence in teaching and research. The size and quality of the department enables us to offer students on this programme a wide range of options across the medieval and modern periods. We also recognise the value of social sciences to historical enquiry and encourage you to enhance your skills in this area to support your appreciation of the past.

First year

The first year represents a foundation year in which the core skills and the fundamental knowledge for the programme are established. 60 credits comprising **Practising History (A): Skills in History and Practising History (B): Approaches to History (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#practising)** (10 credits each), **The Economic History of Modern Britain (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#economichistory)** and **The Social History of Modern Britain (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#socialhistory)** (each 20 credits). Students also study either **Discovering the Middle Ages (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#medieval500)** and **Living in the Middle Ages (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#medieval1050)**, or, **The Making of the Modern World 1500-1815 (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#reformation)** and **The Making of the Contemporary World 1815-2000 (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#makingcontemporaryworld)** (20 credits each) in order to establish a strong foundation in historical enquiry and understanding.

In order to enhance awareness of social science concepts relevant to the study of economic and social history, students are encouraged to study their **Themes and Areas 1 (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#themes1)** module (20 credits) from a list of those on offer within the Social Sciences, although students are free to choose from other approved modules from a University wide list if this is more appropriate to their interests and aptitudes. Students must pass at least 100 credits in order to proceed to the second year of the programme.

Second year

In the second year, the core module **Foundations of Modern Britain (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#foundationsmodernbritain)** develops students' understanding of industrialisation and its social impact within Britain, it also enhances students' facility with the analysis and interpretation of primary source evidence, introduced in the first year. In addition, **Group Research (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#groupresearch)** builds on collaborative and presentational skills introduced during the first year skills programme, as well as reinforcing research skills being developed elsewhere in the second year, and provides a further opportunity for students to engage directly with primary source evidence.

Research Methods (Dissertation Preparation) (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#researchmethods) will give students first-hand experience of the work of a historian as they learn to identify and frame a valid, intellectually coherent research question for their dissertation. **History in Theory and Practice (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#theoryandpractice)** addresses questions to do with the nature of history and historical knowledge. Its broad scope is designed to aid independent thinking and reflection by students.

Students will also study one **optional 20-credit module (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#eshoptions)**, chosen from a list of modules in economic and social History for second year students within the Department of History and one from **Themes and Areas 2 (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#themes2)**. All modules studied in the second year contribute to final degree classification according to the regulations which apply throughout the University (the average of marks achieved at year two being weighted at 25% for finals classification).

Third year

In the final year students must take a **Special Subject (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#specialsubject)** in Economic and Social History (20 + 20 credits). This provides an opportunity to focus more narrowly on a specific area of the discipline and develop a deep understanding of issues and debates in the secondary literature relevant to it; the Special Subject also requires students to work with primary sources at an advanced level.

It is also compulsory for students to complete an independent piece of research (the **Dissertation (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#eshdissertation)**) within the field of Economic and Social History. This allows them to consolidate the skills gained throughout their programme and deepen their knowledge of an area of interest which is precisely defined. Students will chose from a range of specialised historical topics dealing with a spectrum of geographical, chronological, and thematic issues in **Advanced Option A (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#advancedautumn)** (Autumn) and **Advanced Option B (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx#advancedspring)** (Spring).

Year Abroad

This four year route offers you the additional educational benefit of a year of study in an approved University in Europe or in English speaking countries. Students with grades of 2.1 or above in their first year will be asked to apply for the Year Abroad in the first term of their second year and if successful, will go abroad in their third year. In addition to the tutor support given from the host University, students who choose to take a Year Abroad will be allocated a member of staff from the Department of History who will monitor their progress while overseas through regular email and/or skype contact.

Why study this course

- One of the largest departments in the country with 30+ full time academic staff operating on an international level.
- A wide variety of options available including British, European and Global Modules.
- Access to a wide variety of resources from the Main Library (which is situated next to the History department) and the Hilton and Styles Libraries in the Arts Building itself.
- The University Special Collections houses some 60,000 rare and early printed books and upwards of 2 million manuscript and archive items.

A day in the life of a History student

Current second year History undergraduate Hannah Witton takes you on a tour of a typical day in the life of a History student at the University of Birmingham.

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Fees and funding

Standard fees (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/courses/fees/standard) apply
Learn more about **fees and funding (/undergraduate/fees/loans.aspx)**

Scholarships
Learn more about our **scholarships and awards (/undergraduate/fees/funding/index.aspx)**

Entry requirements

Number of A levels required: 3

Typical offer: ABB

General Studies: not accepted

Additional information:

International Baccalaureate Diploma: 34 points

Access programmes: 60 credits overall to include 45 credits at level 3, of which 30 must be at Distinction and 15 at Merit. All remaining credits must be at level 2 and include 12 in Maths and 12 in English.

Other qualifications are considered – learn more about **entry requirements (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/requirements)**

A subject booklet is available – email: **h.j.cullen@bham.ac.uk (mailto:h.j.cullen@bham.ac.uk)** or tel: +44 (0)121 414 5752

International students:

We welcome applications from international students and invite you to join our vibrant community of over 4500 international students who represent 150 different countries. 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.

Depending on your chosen course of study, you may also be interested in the Birmingham Foundation Academy, a specially structured programme for international students whose qualifications are not accepted for direct entry to UK universities. Further details can be found on the **foundation academy web pages (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/foundation-academy/Pathways/index.aspx)** .

How to apply

Apply through UCAS at **www.ucas.com (http://www.ucas.com/)**

Learn more about **applying (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/courses/apply)**

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Key Information Set (KIS)

Key Information Sets (KIS) are comparable sets of information about full- or part-time undergraduate courses and are designed to meet the information needs of prospective students.

All KIS information has been published on the Unistats website and can also be accessed via the small advert, or 'widget', below. On the **Unistats website (http://unistats.direct.gov.uk)** you are able to compare all the KIS data for each course with data for other courses.

The development of Key Information Sets (KIS) formed part of HEFCE's work to enhance the information that is available about higher education. They give you access to reliable and comparable information in order to help you make informed decisions about what and where to study.

The KIS contains information which prospective students have identified as useful, such as student satisfaction, graduate outcomes, learning and teaching activities,

assessment methods, tuition fees and student finance, accommodation and professional accreditation.

Related news and events

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

Learning and teaching

As a Birmingham student you are part of an academic elite and will learn from world-leading experts. At Birmingham we advocate an enquiry based learning approach, from the outset you will be encouraged to become an independent and self-motivated learner, qualities that are highly sought after by employers. We want you to be challenged and will encourage you to think for yourself.

Your learning will take place in a range of different settings, from scheduled teaching in lectures and small group tutorials, to self-study and peer group learning (for example preparing and delivering presentations with your classmates).

Support

To begin with you may find this way of working challenging, but rest assured that we will enable you to make this transition. You will have access to a comprehensive support system that will assist and encourage you, including personal tutors and welfare tutors who can help with both academic and welfare issues, and a formal transition review during your first year to check on your progress and offer you help for any particular areas where you need support.

Our **Academic Skills Centre** also offers you support with your learning. The centre is a place where you can develop your mathematical, academic writing and general academic skills. It is the centre's aim to help you to become a more effective and independent learner through the use of a range of high-quality and appropriate learning support services. These range from drop-in sessions to workshops on a range of topics including note taking, reading, writing and presentation skills.

From the outset, you will be assigned your own **Personal Tutor** who will get to know you as you progress through your studies, providing academic and welfare advice, encouraging you and offering assistance in any areas you may feel you need extra support to make the most of your potential and your time here at Birmingham.

The **Academic Writing Advisory Service (AWAS)** will provide you with individual support from an academic writing advisor and postgraduate subject-specialist writing tutors. You will receive guidance on writing essays and dissertations at University-level which can be quite different from your previous experiences of writing. Support is given in a variety of ways, such as small-group workshops, online activities, feedback through email and tutorials.

Student experience

Supporting you throughout your transition to University, offering research opportunities and study skills support and helping you develop and prepare for your post-University careers - our **Arts and Law Student Experience Team (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/artslaw/student-experience/index.aspx)** strive to help you get the most out of your academic experience.

Central to Learning and Teaching in the School of History and Cultures at the University of Birmingham is **critical enquiry, debate and self-motivation**, summed up by the term Enquiry Based Learning.

What does this mean for you?

Enquiry-based learning describes an environment in which learning is driven by the shared enquiry of students and tutors. Depending upon the level and the discipline, it can encompass problem-based learning, evidence-based learning, small scale investigations, field work, projects and research.
Enquiry-based learning places you at the centre of your own learning process so that you learn through involvement and ownership and not simply by being a passive recipient of information thrown at you. You will spend time developing comprehension and note-taking skills. History is a subtle and complex subject and the literature you need to master can be demanding and complex. To 'get' it, you need plenty of thinking time. Reading, thinking and analysing for yourself are the most important parts of your degree experience. This approach will enable you to take control of your own learning as you progress through your degree. Moreover, it will encourage you to acquire essential skills that are highly valued by employers: creativity, independence, team-working, goal-setting and problem-solving.
The overall approach we adopt is one of more heavily weighted contact hours in Year 1, but tapering off over years 2 and 3, as you begin to acquire greater confidence in discussion and writing. We are strongly committed to small-group seminar teaching, particularly in the final two years of your degree: you will find that most of your teaching happens not in large, anonymous lectures but in smaller groups of students where you can actively participate in discussion and have the benefit of personal contact with academic staff. In your final year, you will also have individual tuition to help you work on your dissertation. As you progress through the syllabus, you are offered an increasingly wide range of particular subject choices.

Year 1 is highly directed – much of it lies in helping you to acquire a general overview of the medieval, early modern and near contemporary past. The 'Practising History' module introduces you to the key skills needed to study History at degree level and enables you to study select historical episodes. All this will help you make more informed decisions about subject choices in Years 2 and 3. These topics are increasingly specialised and enable you to get to grips with them in real depth. During your first year you will undergo a formal 'transition' review to see how you are getting on and offer you help for any particular areas where you need support.

In **Year 2**, in each term, you have a choice of around 15 Options to study. You will start doing preparatory work for your final-year dissertation, selecting a topic,

assessing its feasibility and engaging in preliminary discussions with potential supervisors. The module History in Theory and Practice provides an overview of the evolution of history writing and an introduction to key issues confronting historians today: you will find this helps you reflect on your own historical research. A notable feature of Year 2 is Group Research: about a dozen specialised historical topics for you to research, not, however, as individuals, but on a collective basis. You are divided into groups of 5-6 students, to work as a team, and to produce both individual essays and a group presentation on what you have researched. The capacity to work as part of a team, to know what it is like to have to accommodate yourself to the way others work, is a valuable asset for future employment.

In **Year 3**, there are some 20 Special Subjects for you to choose from, ranging from the early medieval period almost up to the present day, and covering a wide range of British, European and non-European areas. You approach the particular subject not only through reading but also by intensive study of original documents. In addition, there are around a further 14 Final Year Options to choose from in each of the autumn and spring terms. The real centre-piece of the Final Year, however, for most students is their dissertation – a piece of extended writing on a subject of your choice and which requires significant use of archival and other primary source materials. You will have done extensive preparatory work for this in Year 2. In Year 3, you will have a calibrated set of one-to-one consultation sessions with an academic supervisor, who will comment and advise on your drafts. This will be real academic writing and the results are often impressive.

Assessment methods

Studying at degree-level is likely to be very different from your previous experience of learning and teaching. You will be expected to think, discuss and engage critically with the subject and find things out for yourself. We will enable you to make this transition to a new style of learning, and the way that you are assessed during your studies will help you develop the essential skills you need to make a success of your time at Birmingham.

You will be assessed in a variety of ways, and these may be different with each module that you take. You will be assessed through coursework which may take the form of essays, group and individual presentations and formal exams (depending on your chosen degree).

During your first year you will undergo a formal 'transition' review to see how you are getting on and if there are particular areas where you need support. This is in addition to the personal tutor who is based in your school or department and can help with any academic issues you encounter.

At the beginning of each module, you will be given information on how and when you will be assessed for that particular programme of study. You will receive feedback on each assessment within four weeks, so that you can learn from and build on what you have done. You will be given feedback on any exams that you take; if you should fail an exam we will ensure that particularly detailed feedback is made available to enable you to learn for the future.

Employability

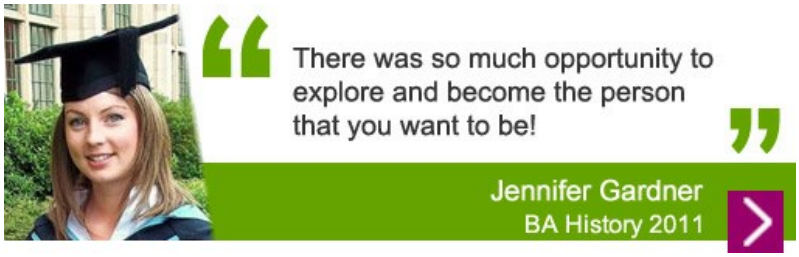
As a History student you will have an excellent opportunity to develop skills that are attractive to employers, including self management and the abilities to research and analyse complex information, work independently and as part of a team, and communicate judgments and arguments articulately.

Over 50% of job vacancies advertised for new and recent graduates do not specify a degree subject, and our graduates have gone on to careers in accountancy, charity work, housing, human resources, international development, law, marketing, media, publishing, politics, retail management and teaching. Central and local government and the public services also attract History graduates, notably the civil service, NHS management, the police and armed services. About 23% of our graduates pursue postgraduate study to specialise in an area of history and cultures of interest to them, or to prepare for careers such as law and teaching.

Whether you have a clear idea of where your future aspirations lie or want to consider the broad range of opportunities available once you have a Birmingham degree, our Careers Network can help you achieve your goal. This is a unique careers guidance service tailored to your academic subject area, offering a specialised team who can give you expert advice.

Last year around 200 employers visited the University, enabling students to meet them and to learn about skills through employer-led workshops. Throughout the academic year we also hold a number of alumni events, careers talks and other initiatives that are designed to answer our students' careers questions and help them forge useful contacts outside the university.

History alumni profiles



(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/historycultures/departments/history/undergraduate/alumni.aspx)

Extra-curricular activities

To enhance your career prospects even further, you will need to think about engaging in some extra-curricular activities while you're at university to broaden your skills and your network of contacts. This can include the many societies at the Guild of Students and also the many voluntary opportunities offered with local arts organisations. Our employer-endorsed award-winning **Personal Skills Award (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/careers/psa.aspx)** (PSA) recognises your extra-curricular activities, and provides an accredited employability programme designed to improve your career prospects.

Our College of Arts and Law **undergraduate research scholarship scheme (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/artslaw/studentexperience/urs/index.aspx)** enables interested students to work on a current academic research project being run by one of the College's academic researchers. Undergraduate research scholars gain work experience over the summer after their first or second year and have the chance to develop skills in both collaborative and independent research.

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Cultural Internships

Our innovative **Cultural Internships (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/culture/volunteering/regionally.aspx)** offer graduates the opportunity for a six month paid internship at a leading cultural institution in the West Midlands. These internships are a unique opportunity to learn fundamental, transferable business and interpersonal skills, through experience of real work in an established cultural institution. Our current partners include Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, Birmingham Royal Ballet, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust and the Library of Birmingham. We have plans to expand the scheme to include our own major cultural assets, such as Winterbourne House, the Lapworth Museum, and the Barber Institute of Fine Arts. This scheme will give you professional experience to set you apart in a competitive graduate market.

We also offer voluntary work which complements your studies by helping you gain practical experiences in occupational settings while contributing back to society. This can bring new skills that will be useful throughout your future and can make a positive impact on your learning whilst at university. Volunteering enables you to develop skills such as communication, interpersonal skills, teamwork, self-confidence and self-discipline all of which can be transferred into your studies.

Your Birmingham degree is evidence of your ability to succeed in a demanding academic environment. Employers target Birmingham students for their drive, diversity, communication and problem-solving skills, their team-working abilities and cultural awareness, and our graduate employment statistics have continued to climb at a rate well above national trends. If you make the most of the wide range of services you will be able to develop your career from the moment you arrive.

94% Students agreed staff are good at explaining things

BA (Hons) Economic and Social History
Full time

To see more details and compare with other courses

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Official data collected by HEFCE

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