

# BA English Literature and Classical Literature & Civilisation



If you have a passion for literature through the ages, this is the perfect degree course for you. As an English Literature student at Birmingham, you will explore the written word from medieval to modern times. Whichever literature modules you choose from our broad range you will be supported by experts and a wealth of resources, for example at our world-renowned Shakespeare Institute in nearby Stratford-upon-Avon.

Your Classical Literature and Civilisation studies allow you to reach back even further, studying the literary, philosophical and political texts at the heart of Greco-Roman culture, along with its historical context, archaeology and contemporary relevance. The course offers you a true all-round education, with 90% of our students going on to rewarding careers or further study six months after graduation.

**[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)**  
(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx>)

## Course fact file

UCAS code: QQ3V

Duration: 3 Years

Places Available: 12

Applications in 2013: 74

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

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[Department of English Literature](/schools/edacs/departments/english/index.aspx)

[Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology](/schools/historycultures/departments/caha/index.aspx)

## Details

In this programme, you study half of your modules (60 credits) in English Literature and half in Classics (60 credits).

### First year

English Literature: The first-year literature foundation modules introduce students to a range of kinds and periods of literature, using a lively variety of critical and theoretical approaches. Modules include:

- Literary Aesthetics after 1800 (20 credits) introduces some key notions of form, style and genre in literary texts written after 1800. You will study three major focal texts (or groups of shorter texts) of different genres, and will develop skills in the close analysis of passages and in discursive essay writing.
- Literary Aesthetics before 1800 (20 credits) introduces key notions of form, style and genre in texts written before 1800. You will study three major focal texts, or groups of shorter texts, of different genres, for example, Malory, *Morte D'Arthur*, revenge tragedies of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries; selected verse satire of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- The Critical Practice module (10+10 credits) focuses on key knowledge and skills central to critical practice in English Studies. You will be introduced to strategies for engaging with primary and secondary sources for literary study and methodologies in literary criticism. This module is closely related to Literary Aesthetics after 1800 and Literary Aesthetics before 1800.

Classics: This year gives you a grounding in Greco-Roman culture, its historical contexts, and its continuing impact on the world we live in. In addition, you may choose to study Greek or Latin language.

## Second year

English Literature: In this year, you take modules that address topics in three major periods of English literature, and which are informed by theoretical as well as textual and historical approaches. You will study:

- *One* Option module in Medieval/Early Modern literature (20 credits) chosen from a list of options.
- *One* Option module in Modern literature (20 credits) chosen from a list of options. Examples might include *Writing and the World in the Nineteenth Century or Victorian and Decadent Literature: The Modern, the Aesthetic, and the Gothic or Making it New: Modernism and Literary Innovation in the Early Twentieth Century or Literature in Britain Since 1945*.
- *One* Transhistorical Literature Option (10 + 10 credits). Examples may include *Satire or Colonial and Postcolonial Literature or Hacking the Book*.

Classics: Our core modules take you to the heart of the Rome of Cicero and Augustus: through their literary, philosophical and political texts, we encounter the Romans at a time of crisis as Republic gives way to Empire. You also make your choice from our unique range of options in literature, culture, language, myth, religion, art, philosophy, archaeology and history.

## Third year

English Literature: The final year is the culmination of your programme, in which you choose two from a number of special option modules, taught by experts in those specialisms, and also undertake a dissertation in which you demonstrate sophisticated understanding of the issues in literature that you have been studying over the last two years. You study:

- Literature Dissertation (10 + 10 credits). You will write a 5,000 word dissertation on a subject of your choice.
- *One choice from* Literature Options (all 20 credits; see below)
- *Either* Shakespeare: Works, Time and Impact (10+10 credits) This course, running through the whole of your final year, allows you the opportunity to think widely across all Shakespeare's texts in their historical, cultural and theatrical contexts; it is taught, in the main, by staff from the University's Shakespeare Institute, and students are encouraged to draw on the resources of the Shakespeare Institute Library.
- *Or a further* Literature Option (20 credits)

Literature Options available to final-year students have recently included: Ben Jonson; Chaucer: Pre-modern Writing and Post-modern Reading; Contemporary Irish Writing; Decadence and Aestheticism; English Reformed; ExtraOrdinary Bodies: Difference and Normalcy in Contemporary Literatures; Fantasy and Fandom; Gossip, Scandal, and Celebrity; Hardy and Wilde; Henry James; Viragos, Coquettes and Prudes; Voicing Women; Victoria's Secrets: Literature and Secrecy in the Nineteenth Century; The Works of T. S. Eliot; Utopia and its Discontents. Not all third-year options run at all times: this information is offered for general guidance only. It may be necessary from time to time to vary timing, content and availability.

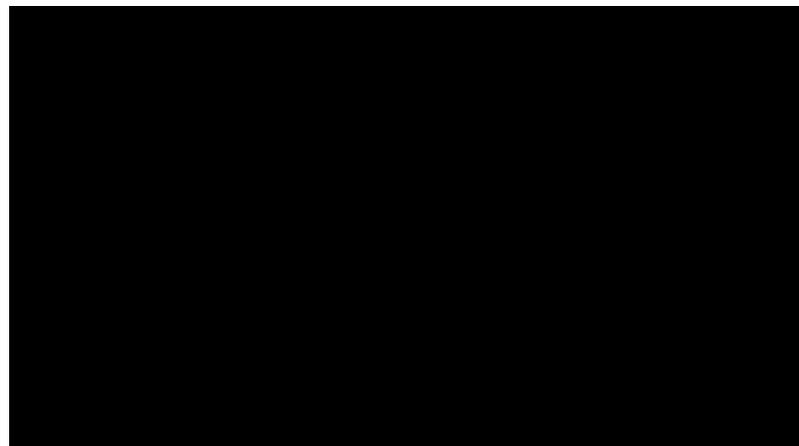
Classics: In the first semester, our unique practical course in Athenian Drama brings to life the form of artistic expression which was the soul of Athens' participatory democracy. In the second semester, we put tragedy and comedy in the context of other writings philosophical, political and historical, through which Athenians achieved lasting insights into the challenges of living together as a community. Once again, you make your choice from our menu of options, which changes from year to year. The highlight of the final year is your dissertation: a substantial research project on a subject of special interest to you.

## Why study this course

In English you have an unparalleled opportunity, not only to engage with the materials of a broad and diverse cultural, textual and linguistic discipline, but also to develop skills in intellectual analysis, critical thinking and articulate expression. We believe that we are partners in learning with our students, and our programme is designed to ensure that you are a fully supported and an active learner.

- All English Literature students take a year-long Shakespeare course, drawing on the unique resources of our internationally-renowned Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-upon-Avon.
- BEDSOC (Birmingham English Department Society) is very active in organising social events, for example trips to the theatre and theme nights out such as Hawaii night.
- The Birmingham Visiting Writers' Programme hosts annual lectures giving students the opportunity to meet eminent writers.
- English literature graduates from the University of Birmingham have a higher than average rate for employability for the subject and are ranked in the top 10 universities nationally for graduate employability.

## English Literature open day talk

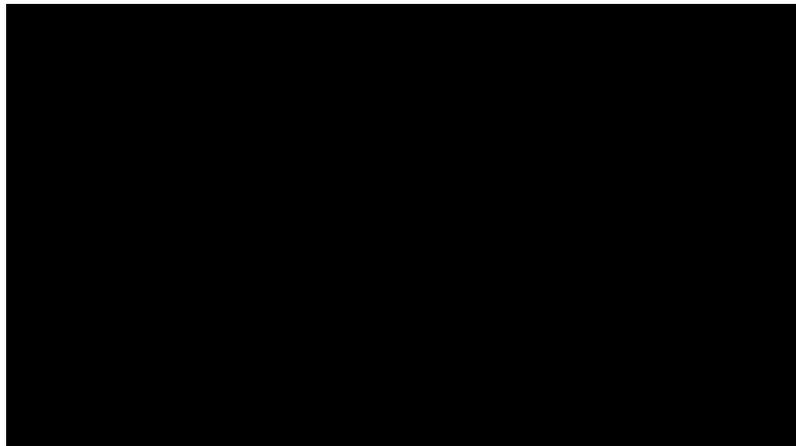


Dr Kate Rumbold delivers the 2014 undergraduate open day talk on studying English Literature at the University of Birmingham.

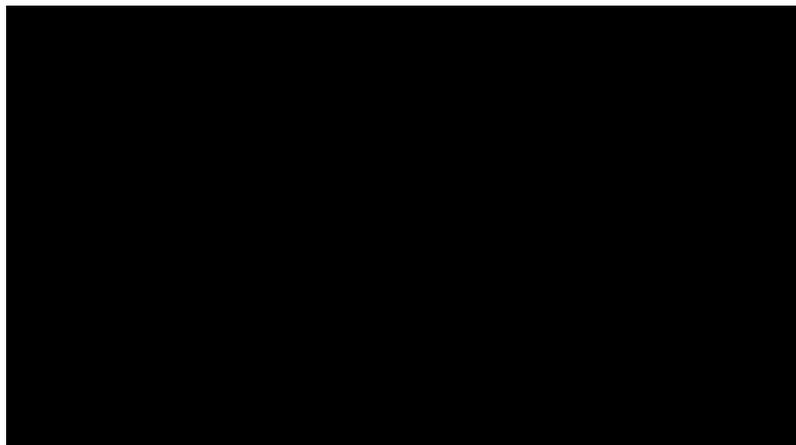
Classics, the study of ancient Greece and Rome, provides a true all-round education, encompassing literature and drama, myth, religion and history, as well as philosophy and art. Classical Literature and Civilisation is an innovative degree, and a fascinating subject to study as part of a Joint Honours combination, through which you will encounter the ancient world in all its diversity.

Classics is right for you if you are fascinated by ancient cultures, and like reading and thinking for yourself. You don't need to have done Classics before. If you haven't studied Latin or Greek, specially designed modules are on offer to help you explore the original texts behind the translations; if you have, we can take you forward from whatever level you have reached. Our distinctive emphasis on using literature, history and archaeology in the study of the ancient world, and the range of expertise available, ensures a wide choice of times, countries and cultures may be studied.

## Classical Literature and Civilisation open day talk



## Joint honours open day talk



Dr Craig Blunt delivers an undergraduate open day talk about studying Joint Honours at the university.

## Fees and funding

**Standard fees** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/courses/fees/standard>) apply

Learn more about **fees and funding** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/undergraduate/loans.aspx>).

### Scholarships

Learn more about our **scholarships and awards** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/undergraduate/funding/index.aspx>)

## Entry requirements



**Number of A levels required:** 3

**Typical offer:** ABB

**Required subjects and grades:** A level English Literature or English Language and Literature grade A

**Additional information:** Other qualifications are considered - learn more about **entry requirements** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/requirements>)

### International students:

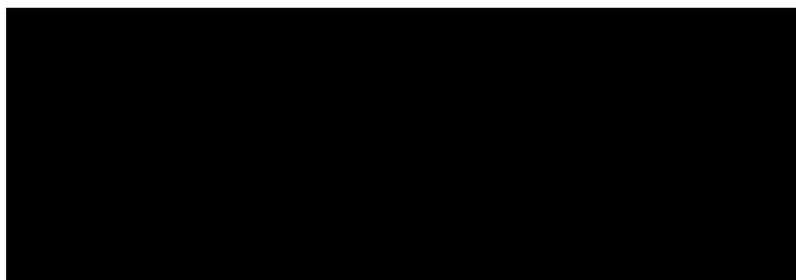
We welcome applications from international students and invite you to join our vibrant community of over 4500 international students who represent 150 different countries. We accept a range of qualifications, our **country pages** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/country/index.aspx>) 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) (<http://www.ucas.com/>)

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





## 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 \(http://unistats.direct.gov.uk\)](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.

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## 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.

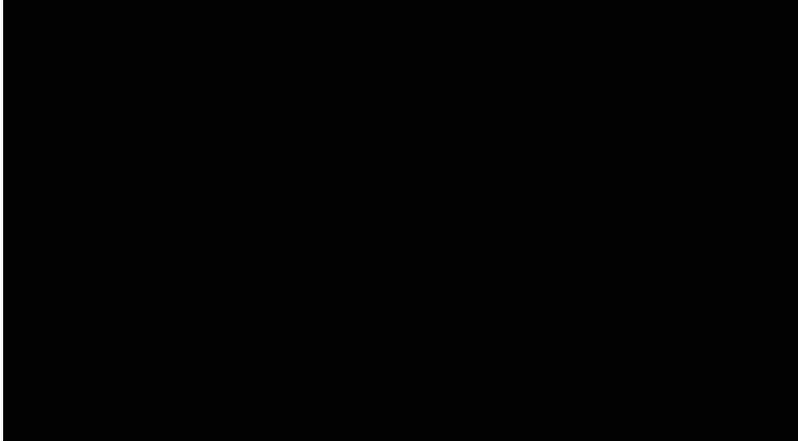
Our **Academic Skills Centre** also offers you support with your learning. The centre is a place where you can develop your mathematical, academic writing and general academic skills. It is the centre's aim to help you to become a more effective and independent learner through the use of a range of high-quality 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.



## 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

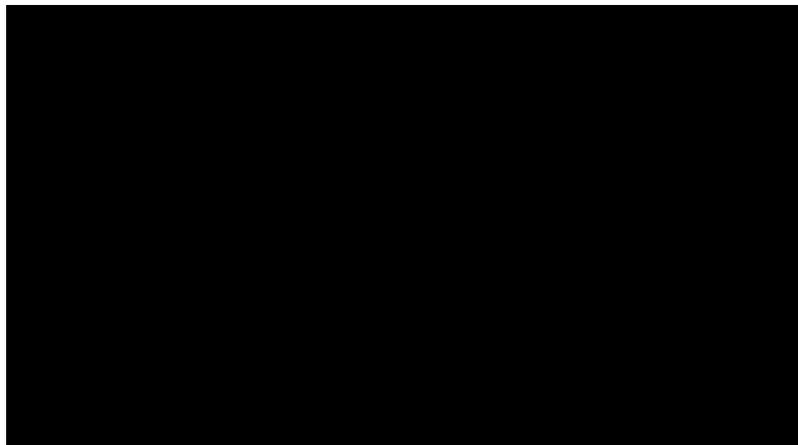
addition to the personal tutor who is based in your school or department and can help with any academic issues you encounter.

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.

The principal means of assessment for English are coursework essays and written exams.

## Employability

### English Literature



[Video above - Dr Kate Rumbold discusses careers and employability during the English Literature open day presentation]

Studying for an English BA at Birmingham is an unparalleled opportunity, not only to engage with a diverse cultural, textual and linguistic discipline, but also to develop skills in intellectual analysis, critical thinking and articulate expression – skills that last a lifetime and qualify you for many possible careers. You will also be encouraged to acquire practical skills that you will find just as useful in your future career, including oral presentation, professional documentation, group work and the uses of information technology.

50% of vacancies advertised for new and recent graduates don't specify a degree subject, and English graduates enter a wide range of careers including advertising, journalism and media, government, law, publishing and teaching at every level. About 25% of English graduates pursue postgraduate study to specialise in an academic area or prepare for careers such as law and teaching.

English graduates from Birmingham have a high rate for employability for the subject, and we are ranked in the top ten universities nationally for graduate employability. 92% of our English graduates go into work or study within six months of graduation. Our graduates have started careers with employers including the BBC, Headline Publishing Group, Mirror Group Newspapers and Oxford University Press, in roles such as account executive, editorial assistant, marketing assistant and sales and events coordinator.

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** (<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/employability/careers/index.aspx>) 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. This includes individual careers advice and events to give you insight into the professions and employers of interest to arts graduates. Our 'Creative careers' series is always popular with our students, and features events with employers and professionals from areas such as advertising, PR and communications, careers in journalism, publishing and writing, and careers in the theatre.

### English alumni profiles

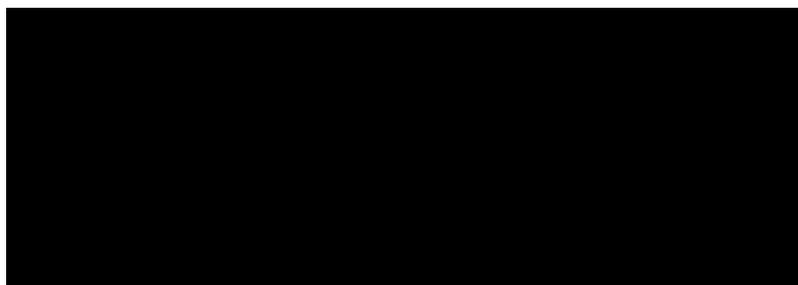


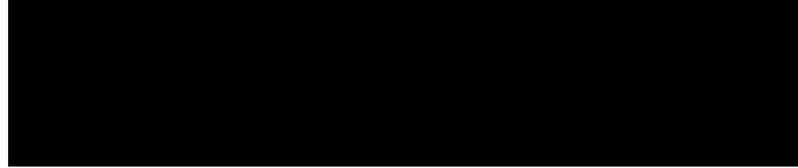
(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/edacs/departments/english/undergraduate/alumni-profiles.aspx>)

### Careers events

We also hold events covering careers in teaching, event management, marketing and working with charities; we're developing links with local arts organisations to create some amazing opportunities for students; and you can even apply for our 'Global Challenge' to work overseas on an expenses paid placement during your summer vacation. We also encourage all our students to apply their skills in the workplace by undertaking internships in the summer; the work experience bursary scheme enables students to apply for funding for placements in those career fields where they are often unpaid.

### Classical Literature and Civilisation





[Video above - Dr Elena Theodorakopoulos discusses careers and employability during the Classical Literature and Civilisation open day presentation]

Graduates of Classical Studies, like all arts and humanities students, develop a wide range of skills which are highly attractive to employers. Studying Classics involves analysing the ancient world in a political, social, and cultural context. This helps the development of skills in research and analysis of complex information, working independently and as part of a team, and articulate communication of judgments and arguments. You will also have the opportunity to carry out self-directed project work which helps self management, organisation and research skills.

The University of Birmingham has graduate employability rates for Classical Literature and Civilisation graduates above the national average. Our Classical Literature and Civilisation graduates have a high average starting salary of £18,000 per year. 90% of our Classical Literature and Civilisation graduates go into work or study within six months of graduation. Our graduates go on to careers in a wide range of areas such as law, business, education and the media, with employers including central and local government, museums, cultural and heritage organisations, charities and a range of commercial companies. Specific jobs include PR and communications, human resources, legal work, library work, events planning and tourism.

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** (<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/employability/careers/index.aspx>) can help you achieve your goal. This is a unique careers guidance service tailored to your academic subject area, offering a specialised team (in each of the five academic colleges) who can give you expert advice. This includes individual careers advice and events to give you insight into the professions and employers of interest to our graduates, including our 'Careers in Heritage, Museums and History' event.

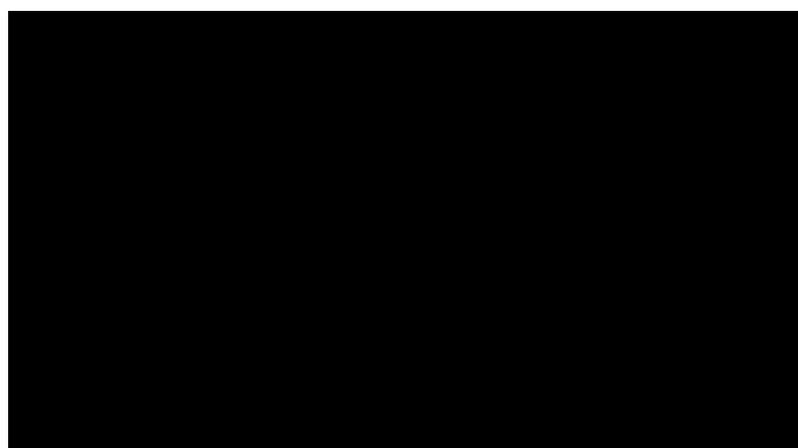
We also hold events covering careers in teaching, event management, law marketing and working with charities. The newly developed optional professional skills module allows students in their second year to gain experience in a working environment which can lead to the development of further valuable skills. Placements are offered with the support of local employers, and we are developing links with heritage and cultural organisations to create more opportunities for students.

In addition, our students are encouraged to apply their skills in the workplace by undertaking internships in the summer; the work experience bursary scheme enables students to apply for funding for those career areas where placements are often unpaid. You can even apply for our 'Global Challenge' to work overseas on an expenses paid placement during your summer vacation.

### 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.



### 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.

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Additional accreditation

No



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