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BA French Studies and History

You will have the opportunity to study not just the French language but also the country's culture and history, including its politics, literature and films. Your History studies will be the perfect complement to this, giving you the wider European and British context from medieval to modern times.

You will be taught by experts in their field who have an international reputation for excellence in teaching and research. At the end of your degree you will be a confident, articulate graduate with excellent possibilities for employment in the UK and EU.

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: RV11

Duration: 4 Years

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

Start date: September

Contact

Admissions Coordinator:
Beth Astington
Email: **modernlanguages@bham.ac.uk (mailto:modernlanguages@bham.ac.uk)**

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

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

Department of Modern Languages: French Studies (/schools/lcahm/departments/french/index.aspx)

Details

In this programme, you study half of your modules (60 credits) in French and half in History (60 credits)

First year

French: In the first year of your programme, you study 3 modules: French language, La France moderne (an introduction to French politics and history) and an Introduction to French Literature and Film Studies. You can find out more about these modules here:

- **French Studies first year modules (/undergraduate/courses/lang/french-modules-firstyear.aspx)**

History: The first year is the foundational year in an academic process that will see you progress from being a dependent to an independent learner. You will study modules spanning the early medieval to late modern periods. You can choose either Discovering the Middle Ages and Living in the Middle Ages or The Making of the Modern World 1500-1815 and The Making of the Contemporary World 1815-2000 (20 credits per module). These explore fundamental themes and issues focused on key periods and indicate the kinds of questions historians explore and some of the methods they employ in answering them. You will also study Practising History (A): Skills in History (Autumn semester) and Practising History (B): Approaches to History (Spring semester), which look more closely at the techniques of the historian and at the nature and evolution of key historical debates.

Second year

French: As you progress into the second and fourth years of the course you can choose to study specialist modules focusing on politics, culture, literature or film so you're increasingly free to tailor the programme to suit your own interests. You continue to follow a core language module but then choose 2 options from a choice of 5. Further details of the modules available can be found here:

- **French Studies second year modules (/undergraduate/courses/lang/french-modules-secondyear.aspx)**

History: The second year is an intermediate year that builds on the foundations laid in the first year of study. You engage in Group Research and extend your historical knowledge through two (20 + 20) subject-specific modules chosen from a wide range of available from Option A in the Autumn semester and Option B in the Spring.

Third year

The third year is spent in France, normally following a programme of study at one of our many partner universities.

- **Year abroad (/undergraduate/courses/lang/french-yearabroad.aspx)**

Fourth year

French: A wide range of specialist language and culture options is available in the final year. Current choices include: Interpreting; The French Press; Contemporary French Cinema; The Algerian War; and Drama and Politics in France. Further details of the modules available in French can be found here:

- **French Studies fourth year modules (/undergraduate/courses/lang/french-modules-finalyear.aspx)**

History: The fourth year represents the culmination of undergraduate study and the final stage of your transition to an independent learner. You hone your historical skills in Advanced Option A or Advanced Option B and you also undertake an in-depth Special Subject module, which is chosen from a variety of available subjects. History/Political Science Joint Honours students *only* can choose to substitute the 20+20 credit Special Subject module (Pathway A) with a Joint Honours History Dissertation (20 credits) and a final year History optional module (20 credits) (Pathway B).

For more details on History modules see **additional information. (/undergraduate/courses/history/History-modules.aspx)**

Why study this course

The French half of your programme is designed to give you an in-depth knowledge of the language and culture of France. We put an emphasis on small group teaching and encourage student participation. We produce confident, articulate graduates who are enthused by their subject and who benefit from excellent possibilities for employment in the UK and EU. Joint Honours students follow the same language course as those studying Single Honours French but choose fewer literary, cultural or political options from the range available in the department. Within French, our staff expertise enables us to offer a wide range of subjects covering all areas of French language, culture, history, literature and film so you will study many different aspects of French language and culture and be part of a large, vibrant community of staff and students.

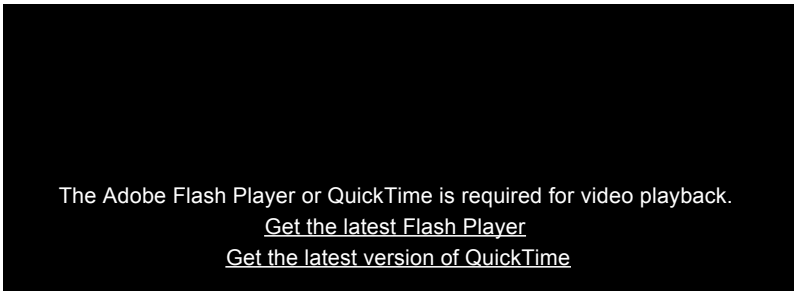
- The Department of Modern Languages at the University of Birmingham is the only one in the country to offer the full range of languages from the Iberian Peninsula (Basque, Catalan, Galician and Portuguese) in addition to our seven principal languages (French, German, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, Russian, and Spanish). All programmes last four years, with the third year spent studying abroad. You can concentrate on a single language, study two or more languages or combine language study with some other subject.
- Birmingham is one of the top four universities for language provision in the judgement of employers, according to the Guardian.
- Our students are extremely satisfied with the experience they receive here at the University of Birmingham, which is reflected in our excellent returns in the National Student Survey over recent years. Our different language sections frequently achieve scores in excess of 80% or 90% for overall satisfaction.
- There are a wide range of Joint Honours with Languages subjects available at Birmingham.
- Read our **ten reasons to study Modern Languages at Birmingham. (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/lcahm/departments/languages/about/strengths.aspx)**

French open day talk

History is not a plain narrative of events but an attempt to discover how and why our own world emerged. Our Joint Honours History programmes concentrate on medieval and modern Britain and Europe but they also provide scope to range beyond European boundaries.You have the chance to investigate unfamiliar territory and to question some of the prevailing myths, preconceptions and prejudices that surround history from the Middle Ages to the present day. Joint Honours History is taught within the **Department of History (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/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 a wide range of options across the medieval and modern periods.

- 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.

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: AAB

Required subjects and grades: A Level History, Medieval History or Ancient History at grade A. A level French grade B

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

Additional information:

International Baccalaureate Diploma: 36 points including French at HL.

International students:

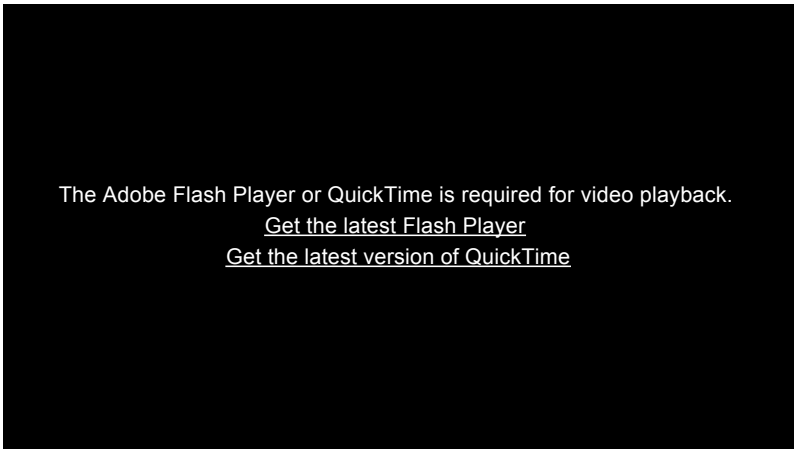
We welcome applications from international students and invite you to join our vibrant community of over 4500 international students who represent 150 different countries. We accept a range of qualifications, our **country pages (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/country/index.aspx)**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



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.

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.

Language laboratory sessions allow you to practise your listening and spoken skills and are an essential part of all our language programmes.

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

French Studies

[**Video above** - Dr Emma Tyler discusses careers and employability during the Modern Languages open day presentation]

Modern Languages graduates have a range of skills that are highly prized by graduate employers: oral and written communication in one or more foreign languages, critical thinking, intercultural awareness and understanding. You will also develop leadership, teamwork and organisational skills through activities such as group projects and your year abroad.

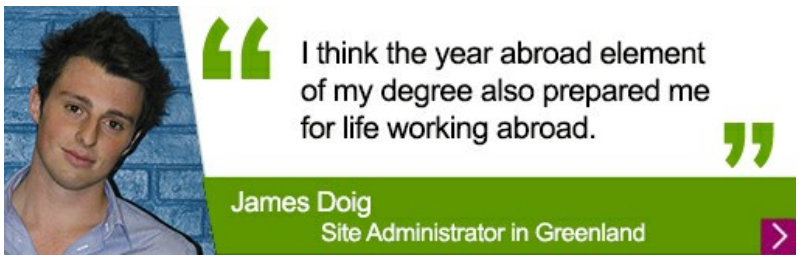
90% of our Modern Language graduates go into work or study within six months of graduation. 50% of vacancies advertised for new and recent graduates don't specify a degree subject, and our graduates enter a wide range of careers similar to other arts and humanities graduates but with much greater scope in international settings. This includes business, government, journalism, the creative arts, teaching and law. Some go abroad to develop their language skills while working as TEFL teachers and university language tutors.

Modern Languages graduates from the University of Birmingham have excellent prospects after graduation. An impressive 80% of our graduates go into professional or managerial jobs within six months of graduation. Our graduates have started careers with employers including British Airways, Deloitte, HSBC, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, the British Council, NATO, BP, central and local government, and universities in the UK and abroad.

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 talks and events, including 'Careers with Languages', to provide insight into careers of interest to our students. Many languages students will also find our events about careers such as teaching, law, marketing, journalism and advertising of interest.

We work hard to help students identify how the year abroad may help their future career. 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 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.

Modern Languages alumni profiles



(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/lcahm/departments/languages/undergraduate/modern-languages-alumni-ug.aspx)

History

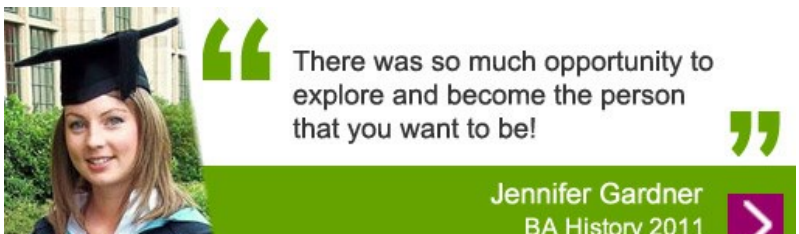
As a History student you will have an excellent opportunity to develop skills that are attractive to employers, including self management and the abilities to research and analyse complex information, work independently and as part of a team, and communicate judgments and arguments articulately.

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.

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.

Additional accreditation **No**

BA (Hons) French Studies and History
Full time
Year abroad

To see more details and compare with other courses
Visit UNISTATS
Official data collected by HEFCE

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