University of Birmingham

BA Geography and German Studies

The Geography and German Studies Joint Honours degree programme gives you great freedom to pursue the areas which interest you most. You will study a range of modules across both subjects, giving you an excellent grounding for a wide range of careers. You work at exactly the same level and to the same academic standard in a Joint Honours programme as in a Single Honours programme. The degree offers a broad range of Geography modules, coupled with a mix of general and specific German modules.

The Geography half of your programme will address key issues of today and tomorrow, such as climate change, water and ecosystem pollution, energy security, global economic problems, population pressure and a rapidly urbanising world. All of these factors have an impact on our daily lives, making this a rewarding and fulfilling subject to study. Here at Birmingham we have one of the UK's most exciting Geography departments, with a large number of staff with specialisms in human, physical and environmental geography.

Studying German at Birmingham helps you achieve a high standard of fluency in spoken and written German. It also allows you to develop the analytical skills that will enable you to explore, in depth, some of the many areas - literary, political and cultural - in which the German-speaking countries have contributed to European life. A particular strength of the course offered at Birmingham is the range and coverage that we can offer. In addition to language teaching, you can study literature, history, linguistics, politics, business German, and cinema with us, and range from the study of the very earliest forms of German to contemporary culture, politics and history.

Student satifaction rates are very high for BA Geography and German Studies with 94% of Geography students and 92% of German Studies students reporting that they are satisfied with the quality of their degree programme.

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: LR72

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 Tutor:
Mr Robert Evans
Tel +44 (0)121 414 6182
Email **r.j.evans.get@bham.ac.uk (mailto:r.j.evans.get@bham.ac.uk)**

Details

In this programme, you study half of your modules (60 credits) in Geography and half in German Studies (60 credits)

First year

Geography: The modular structure allows you maximum flexibility in developing your own interests without channeling you into decisive choices too early. In the first year you will be exposed to the main principles of human and physical geography, to global environmental issues, and various practical skills. You will also explore contemporary urban issues using Birmingham as a real-world laboratory. The first semester includes residential fieldwork in human and physical geography.

German: You embark upon a structured language course that leads you by stages from what you have learned at school or college up to final degree level. You are also introduced to German literature, history and linguistics (both contemporary and historical). Details of the first year modules available in German can be found here:

- **First year German Studies modules (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/lang/german-modules-firstyear.aspx)**

Second year

Geography: You are now introduced to specialist techniques such as computer cartography and the use of databases and spreadsheets. You learn how to develop a research proposal, which may be the starting point for your dissertation in the final year. Training in more advanced fieldwork skills is provided by courses held in European centres. You also choose from optional modules in many different branches of Geography.

German: As well as continuing to develop your language skills, you also study special topics chosen from a wide range of courses in the fields of German literature, film and theatre, gender studies, history, society, politics, culture and linguistics. Details of the second year modules available in German can be found here:

- **Second year German Studies modules (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/lang/german-modules-secondyear.aspx)**

Third year

Your year abroad in the third year is compulsory. Most of our students spend it (via the EU-funded Erasmus/Socrates scheme) at one of our many partner universities in Germany or Austria, although some prefer to work in a German-speaking country as British Council language assistants teaching English in a school/college. Details of the year abroad placements can be found here:

- **Year abroad information (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/lang/german-yearabroad.aspx)**

Fourth year

Geography: In your final year you select from a wide range of modules that provide the more specialised knowledge and skills in the areas of Geography that appeal to you.

German: The fourth and final year of your degree consists of an advanced practical language element (oral work, translation both into and out of German and essay writing in German), together with a number of optional courses in German literature (both modern and medieval), history, society, politics, philosophy, linguistics and philology. Details of the final year modules available in German can be found here:

- **Fourth year German Studies modules (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/lang/german-modules-finalyear.aspx)**

Why study this course

Geography at Birmingham combines a sound academic training with an insight into practical, social, economic and environmental issues. You refine perspectives and develop skills in a degree programme that encourages the use of imagination and observation to resolve real problems affecting people and environments.

The German Department has nine full time members of staff, three of whom are native German speakers. Staff teaching and research interests cover the whole spectrum of German Studies from the earliest times right up to the present. With an annual intake of around 50 undergraduate students following a variety of degree programmes, we are one of the larger German departments in the UK, yet we are still small enough to provide a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

- 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)**

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 Geography grade A. German can be studied post A level or ab initio

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. Applicants should normally be able to demonstrate some previous experience in learning a modern language.

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.

As a student in the Geography department your degree will have a modular structure. In each year learning is delivered over two teaching semesters of eleven weeks and a third summer term of eight weeks for revision, examinations and progress review. Your learning will take place in a range of different settings, including lectures, small group tutorials, seminars, laboratory classes and through supplementary IT-based materials, as well as the more traditional use of books and journals in the University Library. Particular course modules in Geography may involve individual or group project work, preparing oral presentations, and library or web-based research. One of the advantages of a larger, long-established university such as Birmingham is the breadth and size of the library resources. With approaching four million books and fast-growing electronic resources, the University Library and Information Services is something we are proud of.

Fieldwork is an important aspect of studies in both human and physical geography. These experiences are embedded in courses to enable you to develop your transferable skills and to demonstrate your ability to work on your own initiative and as part of a team. This is invaluable in equipping you for future employment. As your degree progresses the modular structure allows you increasing choice so that you can follow the subject themes in Geography that most interest you.

You will have access to a comprehensive support system throughout your studies that will assist and encourage you, including personal tutors and welfare tutors. You will be assigned to a Personal Tutor for the whole three years, who can help you with any questions you may have while you study. You will also have your own Dissertation Supervisor in Year 2 and Year 3, to help guide you through the exciting process of designing and carrying out your dissertation project in an area of your choice.

Studying with us you will benefit from cutting edge equipment and facilities in the School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences, including our state-of-the-art Earth imaging and visualisation laboratory for teaching.

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

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

Geography

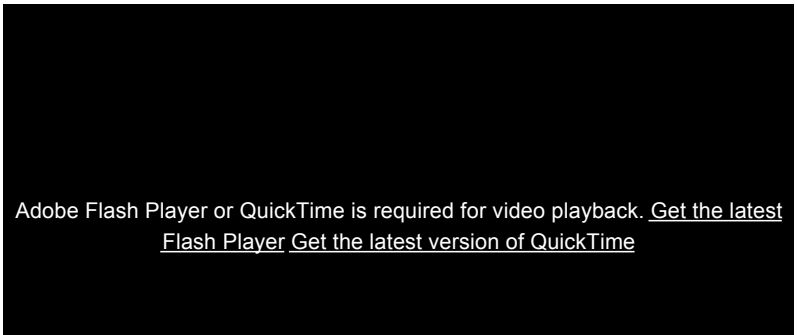
Geography graduates have an excellent employment record after University. Past evidence shows that you will be highly regarded by employers because you will be flexible, able to write and analyse well and have a broad range of transferable skills relevant to the challenges of today and tomorrow.

If you use your time at university well, when you graduate you will be literate and able to write well in a number of different styles, and structure an argument fully. You will also be able to use a wide range of IT programmes and be familiar with industry-standard software packages, as well as proficient in the use of maps, visual media and images to effectively support your proposals. You will have developed personal transferable skills such as communication, presentation, and teamwork, and be able to use your own initiative, solve problems and manage your own time. This combination of skills will set you in good stead for a wide range of different careers upon graduation.

Many Geography graduates use their skills to get jobs directly related to geography, including nature conservation, environmental consultancy, tourism development, and town planning. A significant proportion also go on to pursue careers in teaching. A number of students get jobs in the public services, the commercial sector and industry, including financial and professional services, personnel management, retail, and local government. Around a quarter of graduates tend to go on to further study before entering employment including PGCE's (for teaching), one-year taught Masters courses (such as those for town planning), or a doctoral research programme.

With a degree in Geography the opportunities are plentiful, and only you know which career path you would like to take. Our unique careers guidance service is tailored to your academic subject area, offering a specialised team within the College who can give you expert advice. Our team source exclusive work experience opportunities to help you stand out amongst the competition, with mentoring, global internships and placements available to you. Once you have a career in your sights, one-to-one support with CVs and job applications will help give you the edge. If you make the most of the wide range of services you will be able to develop your career from the moment you arrive at Birmingham.

German 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.

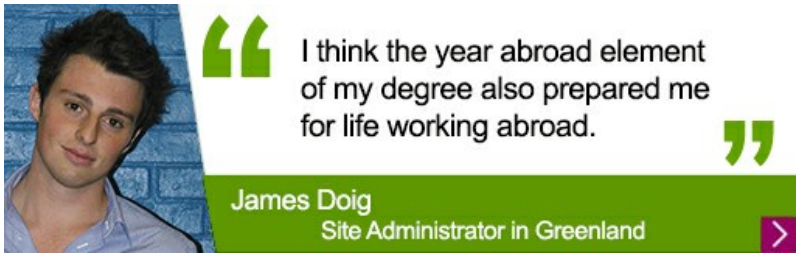
87% of our Modern Language graduates go into work or study within six months of graduation. 50% of vacancies advertised for new and recent graduates don't specify a degree subject, and our graduates enter a wide range of careers similar to other arts and humanities graduates but with much greater scope 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 85% 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)

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.

Adobe Flash Player or QuickTime is required for video playback. Get the latest Flash Player Get the latest version of QuickTime

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 REP, 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) Geography and German Studies
Full time
Year abroad

To see more details and compare with other courses

Visit UNISTATS

Official data collected by HEFCE

© University of Birmingham 2014