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BA Modern Languages and English Literature

The Modern Languages and English Literature degree programme gives you great freedom to pursue the areas which interest you most. Exploring these two subjects is a wonderful way to broaden your horizons and compare two fascinating cultures. The languages available to study alongside English literature are French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish. You will study a range of modules from both your chosen language and English literature, giving you an excellent grounding for a wide range of careers.

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: 7Q6Q

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: Dr Emma Tyler
Tel: 0121 414 5963
Email: **modernlanguages@bham.ac.uk (mailto:modernlanguages@bham.ac.uk)**

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

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

Department of Modern Languages: German Studies (/schools/lcahm/departments/german/index.aspx)

Department of Modern Languages: Hispanic Studies (/schools/lcahm/departments/hispanic/index.aspx)

Department of Modern Languages: Italian Studies (/schools/lcahm/departments/italian/index.aspx)

Department of Modern Languages (/schools/lcahm/departments/languages/index.aspx)

Department of Modern Languages: Russian Studies (/schools/lcahm/departments/russian/index.aspx)

Details

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

Most modern languages can be taken from beginners or post-A level, apart from French which can only be taken from post-A level.

Available combinations for the Modern Languages and English Literature degree programme. (/undergraduate/courses/jointhonours/languages-english-histart-music-modules/combinations-languages-english.aspx)

First Year, Second year and Final year

Modern Languages:

You can find out more about the available modules dependent on your credit weighting for your chosen language(s) below:

- French: **year 1 (/undergraduate/courses/jointhonours/languages-english-histart-music-modules/french-first-year.aspx)** , **year 2 (/undergraduate/courses/jointhonours/languages-english-histart-music-modules/french-second-year.aspx)**
- German: **year 1 (/undergraduate/courses/jointhonours/languages-english-histart-music-modules/german-first-year.aspx)** , **year 2 (/undergraduate/courses/jointhonours/languages-english-histart-music-modules/german-second-year.aspx)**
- Italian: **year 1 (/undergraduate/courses/lang/italian-modules-firstyear.aspx)** , **year 2 (/undergraduate/courses/lang/italian-modules-secondyear.aspx)**
- Russian: **year 1 (/undergraduate/courses/jointhonours/languages-english-histart-music-modules/russian-first-year.aspx)** , **year 2**

(/undergraduate/courses/jointhonours/languages-english-histart-music-modules/russian-second-year.aspx)

- Spanish: **year 1 (/undergraduate/courses/jointhonours/languages-english-histart-music-modules/spanish-first-year.aspx)** , **year 2 (/undergraduate/courses/jointhonours/languages-english-histart-music-modules/spanish-second-year.aspx)**

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 16th and 17th centuries; selected verse satire of the 18th 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.

In the **second 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.

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; Literary Modernism; Literature and Politics in the 1930s; Literature, Sexuality, and the Body; Lyrical Ballads; Medieval Manuscripts; The Novels of Virginia Woolf; Paradise Lost: Text and Context; 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.

Year abroad

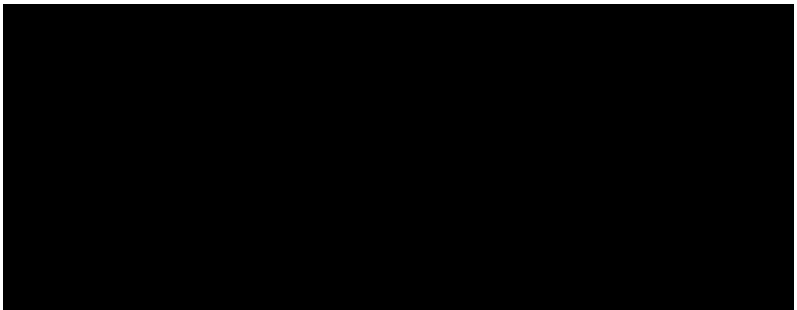
The third year is spent abroad. You attend Universities in the country or countries of your language(s) of study. You may also, if you are going to a French, German Italian or Spanish-speaking country, spend the year as a teaching assistant. Work placements are available for some language combinations. The year abroad is one of the most exciting aspects of the programme and many graduates remember it as one of the best years of their life.

Why study this course

At Birmingham, you'll benefit from an intellectually challenging and stimulating environment for your undergraduate studies, focused on ensuring you're a fully supported and active learner. Our degrees are designed to provide both academic excellence and vocational development; a balance that's highly sought after by employers in today's intellectual and creative industries.

- 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)**

Modern Languages open day talk



Dr Emma Tyler delivers the 2013 undergraduate open day talk on studying Modern Languages at the University of Birmingham.

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.

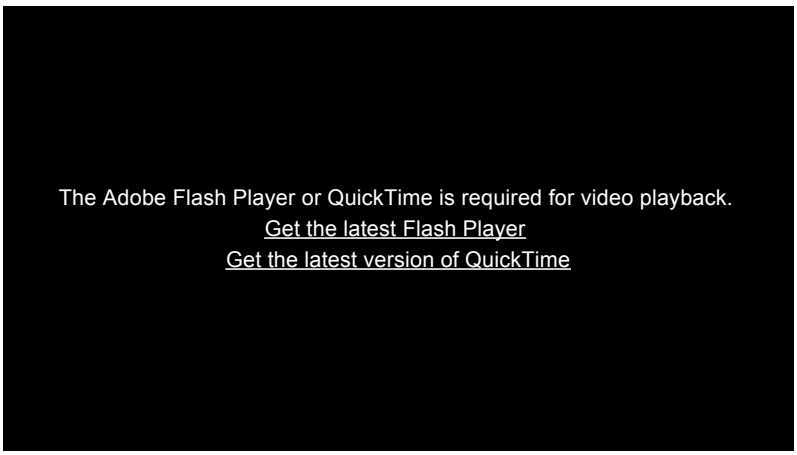
- All English Literature students take a year-long Shakespeare course, drawing on the unique resources of our internationally-renowned Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-upon-Avon.
- BEDSOC (Birmingham English Department Society) is very active in organising social events, for example trips to the theatre 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 at undergraduate level

English Literature open day talk

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

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 English Literature or English Language and Literature grade A. If you have an A level in French, Spanish, German, Italian or Russian you can take your language study at advanced level. You will need to obtain a B or above at A level in the language that you are going to study.

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

Additional information:

To take a language from beginners level, evidence of language learning ability is required such as a grade A in a Modern Language at GCSE.

International Baccalaureate Diploma: 36 points

Those wanting to study at advanced level will need a modern language 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

When completing your UCAS form, please indicate the languages you wish to study as part of BA Modern Languages and English Literature under further details within the choices section of the application form.

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.

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).

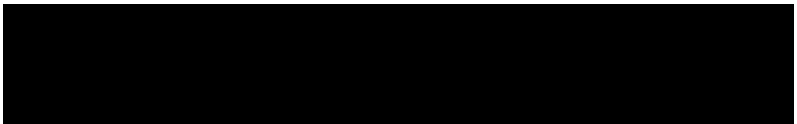
During your first year you will undergo a formal 'transition' review to see how you are getting on and if there are particular areas where you need support. This is in addition to the personal tutor who is based in your school or department and can help with any academic issues you encounter.

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

Modern Languages



[**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.

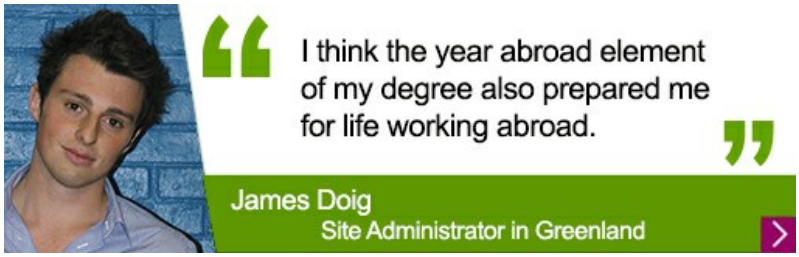
90% of our Modern Language graduates go into work or study within six months of graduation. 50% of vacancies advertised for new and recent graduates don't specify a degree subject, and our graduates enter a wide range of careers similar to other arts and humanities graduates but with much greater scope 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)

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.

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) Modern Languages and English Literature
Full time

To see more details and compare with other courses

Visit UNISTATS

Optional year abroad	Official data collected by HEFCE

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