

Programme Specification

BA Ancient History and History

For students entering Part 1 in September 2026

UCAS Code: V117

UFANXHHS

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This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	3 years
Length of Programme with placement/year abroad	BA Ancient History and History with Placement Experience - 4 years (internal transfer only) BA Ancient History and History with Year Abroad - 4 years (internal transfer only)
Accreditation	N/A
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	Classics and Ancient History (including Byzantine Studies and Modern Greek)

Programme information and content

The programme aims to provide you with a thorough degree level education in history from ancient to modern times. In **Ancient History** we teach a broad and inclusive version of the ancient world, using and evaluating many diverse forms of evidence – archaeological, literary, philosophical, and historical. Our guiding principle is that the ancient world should be accessible to all, and everyone can benefit from and enjoy studying it. The capacities and interests that we foster will thus enable our graduates to act as engaged citizens of the multicultural modern world, open to new arguments and able to adjust their perspectives in line with the evidence. The skills gained in the course of our stimulating degree programme – including communication, presentation, research, and data management skills – are valued by a wide range of employers. Students also have the opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding of a range of ancient languages.

The **History** element of this joint-disciplinary programme offers insights into the richness and variety of human experience. Throughout this process of discovery, students encounter a wide range of subjects and approaches, while having the opportunity to pursue their own enthusiasms, and to benefit from the research expertise and activities of staff.

We aim to familiarise students with a broad chronological range, whilst allowing them to specialise in particular periods and areas of British, European, African, Atlantic, US American, Russian, Middle Eastern and South Asian history, and to pursue their own interests further through independent study and a Dissertation.

The programme develops subject-based and transferable skills, while encouraging a scholarly, committed and enthusiastic engagement with the study of the past.	
Part 1:	<p>Part 1 of Ancient History introduces you to the study of Greek and Roman civilisations, with a particular emphasis on the development of the study of primary sources and source criticism, alongside the development of writing skills to explore specific historical topics.</p> <p>In History, Part 1 introduces you to the discipline through study of long-term historical change across the medieval, early modern and modern periods, also familiarising you with the sub-fields of political, intellectual and cultural history. It aims to develop the research, presentational, organisational and essay-writing skills required for the successful study of history at undergraduate level, while highlighting contrasts between academic and popular history, and the importance of strategic career planning.</p>
Part 2:	<p>Part 2 in Ancient History enables you to develop your knowledge of Greek and Roman history by studying a range of different periods from ancient history across a choice of modules, from Alexander the Great to Late Antiquity. A careers-focused module will encourage you to reflect on the transferable skills you are gaining through your degree and guide you towards the best ways to present these to prospective employers.</p> <p>In History you will have the opportunity to develop more specialised historical knowledge of historical periods and geographical areas. You also have the opportunity to select modules encouraging you to engage with public history beyond academia, identify the wide range of transferable skills arising from the study of history at BA level, and develop additional skills directly relevant to successful job applications. If you intend to base your final-year dissertation on research in history, we strongly recommended that your choices at Part 2 include a module introducing you to a variety of primary sources and research approaches.</p>
Placement/Study abroad year:	The four year variants of the programme (BA Ancient History and History with Study Year Abroad or Professional Placement) offer you an outstanding opportunity to develop your experiences and transferable skills, either through study in a different academic setting (Study Year Abroad) or through a Professional Placement. The programme also offers shorter placement and study abroad opportunities.
Part 3:	Part 3 gives you the opportunity to approach topics in greater depth through the provision of optional modules and the opportunity to research a topic in depth for a dissertation or independent project in depth.

Programme Learning Outcomes - BA Ancient History and History

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

	Learning outcomes
1	Demonstrate extensive subject knowledge across a wide range of historical subjects and themes.
2	Demonstrate understanding of the principles and methods by which historical information is acquired and analysed.
3	Locate and access information, evaluating sources and thereby recognising that not all statements, arguments, and opinions are of equal validity.
4	Command the analytical tools to develop critical and empathetic interpretations of material, with an appreciation of genre, perspective, content and purpose.
5	Construct evidence-based and logically structured arguments through an understanding of various theories and methodologies.
6	Communicate effectively in writing and in other media.
7	Interpret and respond to feedback, identifying objectives and means for improvement.
8	Contextualise historical knowledge and respond to ongoing global affairs from an informed historical perspective.
9	Acknowledge the impact of contemporary debates around issues like inequality, sustainability, globalisation, cultural diversity, decolonisation and anti-racism on historical interpretation.
10	Demonstrate a wide range of skills relating to employability in the wider world of work; these include teamworking, problem solving, communication, independent working and digital literacy.

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

In addition to the learning outcomes stated above if you are on a placement or study abroad programme you will have the opportunity to develop the following learning outcome:

Additional Learning outcomes
Study Abroad By the end of the Study Abroad Programme, students will have adapted to international study contexts in order to achieve the required academic outcomes determined by the host institution.
Placement

By the end of the Placement Year Programme, students will have explored and developed their professional experience, skills and knowledge, contributing significantly towards their continuous learning and career prospects as graduates.

Module information

Each part comprises 120 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Part 1 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
CL1GH	Greek History: war, society, and change in the Archaic Age	20	4
CL1RH	Roman History: the rise and fall of the Republic	20	4
HS1MH	Making History and You: Practices and Possibilities	20	4
HS1PIH	Perspectives in History	20	4

Remaining credits will be made up of optional modules available in the Department of Classics and in the Department of History.

Students must choose 20 credits of optional modules in Classics and 20 credits of optional modules in History.

Up to 20 credits of optional modules may be substituted for modules from an approved list.

Part 2 Modules:

Students must choose one 20-credit employability module from a list supplied by the Department of Classics.

Remaining credits will be made up of optional modules available in the Department of Classics and the Department of History.

Students must select 40 credits of modules in Classics, with at least 20 credits of modules in Greek History: Persian Wars to Alexander (CL2CGH) or Roman History: Republic to Empire (CL2RO).

Students must take at least 40 credits of modules from the Department of History.

Up to 20 credits of optional modules may be substituted for modules from an approved list.

Modules during a placement year or study year (if applicable):

Students on one of the 4-year programmes will take one 120 credit module: Professional Placement Year (CL2PPY) or Study Abroad Year (CL2SAY).

Students may be permitted to undertake a placement year or a study abroad year between Part 2 and Part 3 of the programme. In such cases students will transfer to a 4-year

programme. The placement or study abroad year should not normally be shorter than nine months full-time.

If you take a year-long placement or study abroad, Part 3 as described below may be subject to variation.

Part 3 Modules:

Students must select one 40 credit dissertation in either Classics or History or the 40 credit Independent Project module (CL3IPR).

Students must select 40 credits of optional modules in History.

Students must select 40 credits of optional modules in Classics.

Up to 20 credits of optional modules in the subject area where the dissertation/project module is taken may be substituted for modules available elsewhere in the University, so that each student has a minimum of 40 credits in both Classics and History.

Placement opportunities

Placements:

You may be provided with the opportunity to undertake a credit-bearing placement as part of your Programme. This will form all or part of an optional module. You will be required to find and secure a placement opportunity, with the support of the University.

Study Abroad:

You may be provided with the opportunity to undertake a Study Abroad placement during your Programme. This is subject to you meeting academic conditions detailed in the Programme Handbook, including obtaining the relevant permissions from your School, and the availability of a suitable Study Abroad placement. If you undertake a Study Abroad placement, further arrangements will be discussed and agreed with you.

Optional modules:

The optional modules available can vary from year to year. An indicative list of the range of optional modules for your programme can be found online in the Course Catalogue. Details of optional modules for each part, including any additional costs associated with the optional modules, will be made available to you prior to the beginning of the Part in which they are to be taken and you will be given an opportunity to express interest in the optional modules that you would like to take. Entry to optional modules will be at the discretion of the University and subject to availability and may be subject to pre-requisites, such as completion of another module. Although the University tries to ensure you are able to take the optional modules in which you have expressed interest this cannot be guaranteed.

Teaching and learning delivery:

For **Ancient History** you will be taught through a mixture of lectures and seminars in Parts 1 and 2, with a greater emphasis on seminars in Part 3. The dissertation or independent project in Part 3 comprises a piece of work based on supervised independent study. Throughout the programme, you should treat the feedback you get for oral and written work as an important learning resource, and you are strongly encouraged to discuss your feedback with staff.

The total study hours for each Part of your programme will be 1200 hours. The contact hours for your programme will depend upon your module combination; an average for a typical set of modules on this programme is Part 1 - 204 hours, Part 2 - 130 hours, Part 3 - 96 hours. Latin and Greek language classes will have more contact hours (up to 80 hours per year for beginners' languages). In addition to your scheduled contact hours, you will be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

For **History**, our teaching and learning strategies revolve around enabling academic success through a variety of assessments. In terms of teaching, lectures are delivered to offer contextual and informative content, providing students with a basic understanding of core subjects and approaches. Seminars enable deeper discussion, allowing students in groups and individually to explore and debate questions relevant to their module. Supervisions are then held to guide students (both individually and in groups), explaining the feedback provided on work submitted and advising on assessments.

History encourages independent study: we expect students to become historians, moving on from simply learning in the classroom towards gaining their own critical voices and developing their own evidence-based interpretations. Learning visits and placements are arranged to encourage students to enhance their experience beyond the classroom.

Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology.

The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for your programme will depend upon your module combination. In addition, you will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which give some flexibility for you to choose when to complete them. You will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details

N/A

Assessment

For **Ancient History** you will be assessed through a wide range of suitable activities, from essays and exams (both written and oral) to presentations, creative responses, and reflective exercises. These activities will become more complex as you progress from Part 1 to Parts 2 and 3. You should expect one or two assessed assignments per 20 credits, except in language modules, where frequent assessments are essential to monitor progress.

For **History**, the programme will be assessed through a combination of written examinations, coursework (including class tests) and oral examinations. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions and include: group work, source analysis, portfolios and creative assessments (maps, fanzines, vlogs etc). Our assessment is designed to introduce (I) students to History-generated skills and understanding. These are then demonstrated (D), ensuring that students master (M) their application in preparation for a career beyond (and sometimes inside) academia. Detailed and constructive feedback will be provided on submitted work and offered to students individually.

Progression

Part 1

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 1, a student will normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain an overall weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1;
- (ii) Obtain a mark of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits taken in Part 1; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in modules amounting to 120 credits. (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree.)

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student must achieve a threshold performance;

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 1 qualifies a student for a Certificate of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Students are able to transfer from a Joint or Major/Minor Honours programme to a Single Honours programme in one of their joint subject areas at the end of Part 1, subject to:

- Meeting the University Threshold Standard at the end of Part 1; and
- Achieving marks of at least 40% in at least 40 credits of modules (e.g., 2 x 20 credit modules) in the subject to which they wish to transfer; and
- Meeting any programme-specific progression rules for the Part 1 Single Honours Programme to which they wish to transfer.

NB Students taking a Major/Minor programme may only transfer to a Single Honours programme in the Major subject and must meet the above requirements.

Students should seek advice about the titles of programmes they may be eligible to transfer to.

Students who transfer from a Joint or Major/Minor Honours programme to a Single Honours programme may not have taken all of the Part 1 modules listed in the Single Honours Programme Specification. The modules which they have taken will be shown on their Diploma Supplement.

Part 2

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 2, a student shall normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain a weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (ii) Obtain marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to at least 80 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to at least 120 credits. (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree.)

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student must achieve a threshold performance;

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 2 qualifies a student for a Diploma of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Professional/placement year

Students are required to pass the professional placement year/study abroad year in order to progress on the programme which incorporates the professional placement year/study abroad year. Students who fail the professional placement year/study abroad year transfer to the non-placement year version of the programme.

Classification

Bachelors' degrees

The University's honours classification scheme is based on the following:

Mark Interpretation

70% - 100% First class

60% - 69% Upper Second class

50% - 59% Lower Second class

40% - 49% Third class

35% - 39% Below Honours Standard

0% - 34% Fail

The weighting of the Parts/Years in the calculation of the degree classification is:

Three year programmes:

Part 2: one-third

Part 3: two-thirds

Four year programmes, including professional placement/study abroad:

Part 2: one-third

Professional placement/Study abroad: not included in the classification
Part 3: two-thirds

Details of the classification method is given in detail in the Assessment Handbook under:

- Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's), or
- Section 18: Awards (Integrated Master's programmes). Students who do not progress to Part 4 of the Integrated Master's will normally be subject to the method detailed under Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's)

Please note that there may be a specific version of the above for your year of entry.

Additional costs of the programme

Some modules use textbooks that are recommended for purchase; the estimated cost is £150 across the programme.

Optional modules may include visits to museums and field trips, including abroad. Travel and/or accommodation costs may range from £20 for a day trip to London to £600 for a week abroad.

Placements may require students to cover the cost of their travel. Study abroad may require additional costs for tuition, travel, and accommodation.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2025.

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

BA Ancient History and History for students entering Part 1 in session 2026/27

3 July 2025

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