

BA French Studies

UCAS code: R120

Awarding Institution:
Teaching Institution:
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s):
Faculty of Arts and Humanities
For students entering Part 1 in 2002
Programme Director: Professor N.D. Segal
Programme Adviser: Dr J. Félix
Board of Studies: French Studies
Accreditation: n/a

The University of Reading
The University of Reading
Languages and Related Studies
Programme length: 4 years
Date of specification: February 2003

Summary of programme aims

The programme seeks to develop students' intellectual potential, enabling them to embark on a wide range of careers or postgraduate studies. Its multi-disciplinary approach aims to produce graduates who are competent communicators in French, who have a sound critical understanding of French and francophone literature, history, culture and politics, and who have acquired a range of skills to underpin their life-long development.

Transferable skills

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills which students are expected to have developed by the end of their degree programme. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to enhance their skills relating to communication (both written and oral), information handling, problem-solving, team working, information technology (word-processing and use of web-based material) and career management.

Students will develop their abilities to deal with intellectual problems effectively by locating information, assessing it critically, communicating independent points of view logically and clearly (both orally and in writing), and substantiating opinions with evidence; the year abroad provides particularly good opportunities for developing increased (inter-)cultural awareness and self-reliance.

Programme content

The programme which follows states which modules must be taken (the compulsory part), together with one or more lists of modules from which the student must make a selection (the optional modules). Students must choose such additional modules as they wish, in consultation with their programme adviser, to make 120 credits in each Part, plus 120 credits assigned to the Year Abroad to make a total of 480 credits for the whole degree. The number of credits in each module is shown in the column after its title.

Part 1 (three terms)

Students must take at least 40 credits in French. A further 20-credit optional module in French may be taken if desired. Additional modules, to a total of 120, should be chosen from those offered in the Part 1 Handbook.

Advanced French

Compulsory modules

		Credits	Level
FR101	<i>Advanced French Language</i>	20	C
and either			
FR103	<i>Contemporary France: History, Politics, Literature</i>	20	C
or			
FR104	<i>French Cinema: Society, Culture and History</i>	20	C

Optional Module

either				
FR103	<i>Contemporary France: History, Politics, Literature</i>	20	C	
or				
FR104	<i>French Cinema: Society, Culture and History</i>	20	C	

Part 2 (three terms)

Credits Level

Students must take 120 credits in French.

Of the 120 credits in Part 2, 5 are taken up by Careers Management Skills (level I).

Compulsory module

FR201	<i>Language 2</i>	20	I	
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Optional modules

Students must choose five 20-credit additional modules from the list below. They may replace 20 of these credits with modules from other programmes. **Note:** the following modules are subject to the availability of academic staff in any one year. Students should consult the relevant Departmental handbook for up-to-date information.

FR2MAN	Language: <i>French for Managers 2</i>	20	I	
FR202	Middle Ages/Medieval: <i>The Crusades</i>	20	I	
FR203	Middle Ages/Medieval: <i>Introduction to Medieval Literature</i>	20	I	
FR204	16th & 19th Centuries: <i>The poet's art: French poetry and prose poetry of the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries</i>	20	I	
FR205	17th & 18th Centuries: <i>The Ingénue's Progress (Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries): L'Ecole des Femmes, La Princesse de Clèves, Les Liaisons Dangereuses</i>	20	I	
FR206	18th Century: <i>La littérature au siècle des Lumières: Montesquieu, Voltaire, Diderot</i>	20	I	
FR207	18th & 19th Centuries: <i>France in the Age of Revolutions, 1750-1870</i>	20	I	
FR208	19th & 20th Centuries: <i>Realism and desire in four French novels, 1846-1926: Balzac, Flaubert, Proust, Gide</i>	20	I	
FR209	19th & 20th Centuries: <i>Five Wars and Three Republics: France 1870-1962</i>	20	I	
FR211	20th Century: <i>Introduction to the Francophone Literature of the Maghreb</i>	20	I	
FR213	20th Century: <i>Le quatrième pouvoir : la presse et les médias en France</i>	20	I	

Year Abroad (three terms in a French-speaking country)

Credits Level

Students must take 120 credits from the following modules

Compulsory modules

FR301	<i>Dissertation</i>	40	H	
FR302	<i>Oral</i>	40	H	

Optional module

either

FR231	<i>University study abroad</i>	40	I	
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FR232	<i>Assistantship abroad</i>	40	I	
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or

FR233	<i>Work placement abroad</i>	40	I
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Part 3 (three terms)

Credits Level

Students must take 120 credits from the following modules:

Compulsory module

FR303	<i>Advanced Language Skills</i>	20	H
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Optional modules

Students must take five modules from the list below. They may replace 20 credits with a Special Subject chosen from those offered within the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. **Note:** the following modules are subject to the availability of academic staff in any one year. Students should consult the relevant Departmental handbook for up-to-date information.:

FR3MAN	<i>French for Managers</i>	20	H
FR304	<i>Provençal</i>	20	H
FR305	<i>The Legend of Tristan and Iseut</i>	20	H
FR306	<i>Warriors and Heroes : the Medieval French Epic</i>	20	H
FR307	<i>Between Rome and France: exile and displacement in French Renaissance poetry and prose</i>	20	H
FR308	<i>Seventeenth-century French tragedy</i>	20	H
FR309	<i>Aspects of the Eighteenth-Century French Novel</i>	20	H
FR310	<i>Women & men in the French récit</i>	20	H
FR313	<i>French-Canadian Novel</i>	20	H
FR314	<i>The Algerian Novel of French Expression</i>	20	H
FR315	<i>French Cinema</i>	20	H
FR316	<i>The French Right since 1940</i>	20	H
FR317	<i>André Gide 1869-1951</i>	20	H
FR319	<i>Political Leaders and Groups in the French Revolution</i>	20	H
FR320	<i>French-Canadian Cinema</i>	20	H
FR321	<i>France and Europe since 1945</i>	20	H
FR322	<i>Les droits de l'homme en question</i>	20	H
FR323	<i>Translation into French</i>	20	H
FR326	<i>Creative Writing</i>	20	H

Progression requirements

To proceed from Part 1 to Part 2, or from Part 2 to the Year Abroad, students must have obtained an overall average of 40 % in the 120 credits in the Examination as a whole, and achieved not less than 30% in any module except that marks of less than 30% in a total of 20 credits may be considered, provided that the candidate has pursued the modules with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

In addition, in Parts 1 and 2, students must have obtained a mark of at least 40% in each of their compulsory modules in French.

To proceed from Year Abroad to Part 3, students must satisfy the examiners that they have completed an approved programme of study or employment in a French-speaking country.

Summary of teaching and assessment

In Part 1, FR103 is taught by lecture to the entire year group accompanied by small-group teaching in seminars. FR104 is taught by lecture with integrated group and pair work. The structure of the content modules in Parts 2 and 3 allows for classes normally of no more than 12

students. These classes will normally be conducted through a combination of lecture and seminar discussions. All language teaching is based on work in groups of no more than 15 students except for the grammar component of FR201 which is taught by a mix of lecture to the entire year group and supplementary internet material for student self-access.

Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3 modules are assessed by coursework and/or formal examination. The Year Abroad French Oral is examined in the Autumn Term of Part 3.

Weighting

In order to be eligible for a four-year Bachelor's degree in the School of Modern Languages which incorporate a language year abroad a candidate must have completed 480 credits (of which not less than 180 shall normally be at H level or above, except in the case where a candidate is deemed to have achieved a Pass). The conventions for assessment and classification are included in the Programme Handbook, but it should be noted that Part 2 modules and Year Abroad I-level modules will count for 33% of final assessment, and Year abroad H-level modules and Part 3 modules will count for 67% of final assessment.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained 280 points from 4 subjects ('A' or 'A/S' levels), including 2 full 'A' levels. Candidates must normally have 100 points (Grade B) from GCE 'A' level French to take FR101 (Advanced French Language) in Part 1. Equivalent international qualifications will be accepted.

Applications from mature candidates are welcomed. While such candidates will normally be expected to have 100 points (Grade B) from GCE 'A' level French to take FR101 (Advanced French Language) in Part 1, consideration is also given to other qualifications and experience. A mature applicant is more likely to receive an offer of a place if he or she has undertaken recent study, for example two or more A levels or an Access course, but each case is assessed on its individual merits. Advice on the acceptability of your qualifications may be sought, where necessary, from the French departmental Admissions Tutor, who may be contacted via french@reading.ac.uk

International applicants. Applications from international candidates are welcomed. International candidates are advised to contact either the EU or the international admissions tutor first, to discuss the suitability of their qualifications.

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

The Departmental Handbooks issued to Part 1 and to degree course students provide extensive information on resources and study skills. The Access Point for Individual Language Learning (APILL) contains a range of audio and audio-visual materials to promote self-study in languages, together with facilities for watching French television by satellite. The University Library is particularly well stocked with works relating to many different aspects of French culture and the Faculty possesses a video suite to support cinema studies.

The Department of French Studies has a departmental library containing a wide range of essential and secondary texts, and videos of French films and documentaries. The departmental newspaper room contains daily newspapers and weekly or monthly magazines. There is also a satellite TV enabling students to watch French programmes. The Department has a comprehensive website at: <http://www.rdg.ac.uk/french> containing information and learning material. The website is regularly updated. The grammar strand at Part 2 has all the Powerpoint information and supplementary grammar exercises available online in pdf format. French Career Management Skills at Part 2 has its own Blackboard site, containing computer-assessed learning activities.

Career prospects

Students graduating in French work in many different fields. Some use their linguistic skills in teaching, including teaching English as a Foreign Language abroad; others proceed to post-graduate courses in various areas, including translating. A degree involving French leads, like degrees in other Humanities subjects, to careers in such areas as administration, management or marketing, or be a prelude to study in law or accountancy; and increasing numbers of students find positions in the business world, including the travel industry, where their knowledge of French can be a distinct asset.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

Subject to arrangements made in exceptional cases only, all students on this programme spend the Year Abroad as an assistant teacher, on a work placement or at one of the Higher Education Institutions with which the Department of French Studies has a Socrates agreement.

Educational aims of the programme

The French programme aims to equip students with the ability to seek and identify sources of information; make articulate written and oral presentations; conduct lucid arguments in support of a case, using evidence appropriately; analyse the form and content of written and audio-visual communication; appreciate the mentality and outlook of people from another culture or age; and develop sound work discipline, including commitment to deadlines and time management. Particular parts of the programme will also have enabled students to develop relevant IT and Career Management skills.

Programme Outcomes

By the end of the programme, students are expected to be able to:

- understand native-spoken French within an educated French environment and to communicate orally with fluency and accuracy;
- read with understanding, critical judgement and evaluation a range of specialist and non-specialist cultural, factual and other texts;
- write accurately in French with an appropriate understanding of the implications of register and style.

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following areas:

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. The French language
2. French and francophone history, politics and/or literature and culture
3. Key approaches and methods of historical and political and/or literary and cultural analysis

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

1. Development of the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking French is by small-group learning and regular non-assessed coursework. In Part 1, grammar is learnt in small groups with regular non-assessed coursework. At Part 2, grammar is taught by Powerpoint lectures, supplemented by access on the internet to the lectures and other self-access material. The Year Abroad in a francophone country offers immersion in French language and culture.

2,3. Acquisition of aspects 2 and 3 is by lecture and seminar or tutorial and/or interrupted lecture. Students are expected to undertake independent reading and research from sources indicated in module bibliographies (library, internet), in order to gain fuller understanding of the topic and its context.

Assessment

The assessment of knowledge is by a combination over the whole degree of unseen examination (1-3), coursework essays (2-3), an oral examination (1) and dissertation (1-3).

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:

1. critically apply literary and historical concepts;
2. identify and solve problems;
3. analyse and interpret;
4. demonstrate and exercise independence of thought and sensitivity to cultural difference.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Intellectual skills are developed through the teaching and learning programme outlined above. Each module involves discussion of the key issues, practice in applying key concepts both orally and in writing, analysis and interpretation of material and, where appropriate, individual feedback sessions on work produced.

Assessment

The variety of assessment methods employed places great emphasis on the learner's ability to demonstrate skills 1-4 through the production of coherent written and oral responses to the tasks set.

C. Practical skills – able to:

1. speak, write, read and understand French at high or a near-native level of proficiency;
2. apply key methods and concepts of linguistic and literary and/or historical analysis;
3. retrieve, sift and select information from a variety of sources;
4. plan and undertake different forms of research based on bibliographies and/or evidence.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

All students receive initial guidance on how to identify, locate and use material available in the university and departmental libraries and elsewhere. Comprehensive bibliographies are provided at the outset of each module. Classes and tutorials are given at Part 1 to all students on the production of essays. Language classes are compulsory in every year, and much primary and secondary reading material is in French. The year abroad further promotes the active learning of French to a high level.

Assessment

Skill 1 is assessed by orals and unseen written examinations. There is regular unassessed coursework. Skills 2-4 are assessed through a pattern of coursework essays, unseen written examination and dissertation.

D. Transferable skills – able to:

1. structure ideas and communicate them effectively orally and in writing;
2. manage time and work to deadlines;
3. participate effectively in groups;
4. work independently;
5. find information and use information technology;
6. be responsible and self-reliant;
7. assess the relevance and importance of the ideas of others;
8. Careers Management.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

All modules require regular written and/or oral work, enabling the student to develop understanding and the need for effective and coherent expression (skill 1). Skill 2 is learnt through the management of different deadlines for different modules within the programme and is a focus of initial one-to-one session under the PAR student development scheme. Skills 3 to 7 are developed from the outset in seminars or interrupted lecture. Skill 6 is a particular focus of the year abroad, its importance being taught during preparatory sessions in Part 2. IT skills are encouraged and developed by being an integral part of much teaching from year 1 onwards. Careers Management Skill development is an integral part of Part 2 and the year abroad with students undertaking appropriate activities.

Assessment

Effective communication of ideas is a major criterion for the assessment of student's work, including organisation of material, problem-solving skills, justified reasoning and logical arguments and fluency – clear introduction, clear presentation of argument and full conclusions. It is assessed by essay and dissertation. Clearly notified penalties are imposed on students not adhering to deadlines or who plagiarise. Students are encouraged to use word-processing, but this skill is not formally assessed. Students are encouraged to use technology-enhanced language learning, but this skill is not formally assessed.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably expect to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in module and programme handbooks.