

## **Introduction to**

# BA (Hons) English and American Studies

## **Combined Honours Programme Specification Supplement**

### **Primary Purpose**

Course management, monitoring and quality assurance.

### **Secondary Purpose**

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

### **Disclaimer**

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification supplement and believes it to be correct. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification supplement but reserve the right to change the content, timetabling and administration of the course whilst maintaining equivalent academic standards and quality.

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# **Combined Honours Programme Specification Supplement**

## **1. Named Award**

BA (Hons) English and American Studies

## **2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)**

C1663F (QT37)

To view units and course structures please visit [www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch](http://www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch) and enter the 'C' code above to find the correct course.

## **3. Awarding Body**

University of Portsmouth

## **4. Teaching Institution**

University of Portsmouth

## **5. Document Control Information**

August 2016

## **6. Effective Session**

2016-2017

## **7. Home Course Leader**

Lee Sartain

## **8. Home Faculty**

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

## **9. Home Department**

School of Languages and Area Studies

## **10. About this Programme Specification Supplement**

This Combined Honours Course Programme Specification Supplement is designed for prospective students, registered students, University staff and potential employers. It provides an introduction to combined honours courses at the University of Portsmouth, and an overview of the course rationale, aims and learning outcomes.

A full Programme Specification is prepared for each half of the course. This supplement links the full Programme Specifications for each half of the Combined Honours Course. In the full Programme Specification documents (see A1. and A2. below), you will find more detailed information on the teaching, learning and assessment methods, learning outcomes, unit information, reference points, support for student learning and regulatory arrangements for each half of the Combined Honours.

**A1. Combined Honours English Literature Half**

**A2. Combined Honours American Studies Half**

## 11. The Combined Honours Degree Course at the University of Portsmouth

At the University of Portsmouth, our Combined Honours Degrees are predetermined combinations of subjects (subject A and subject B). Most students will be registered on a joint award where the number of credits studied in both subjects is roughly the same (approximately 50/50). A small number of Combined Honours courses are designated major/minor courses where subject A is the major subject and subject B is the minor subject (approximately 66/33). For a joint Combined Honours, a student may choose to undertake a dissertation in subject A or subject B; in the case of major/minor awards, the dissertation will always be in the major subject. On the English and American Studies Programme, students may choose to do a 40 credit 10,000 word dissertation related to the English Literature side of their programme. If a student wishes to conduct substantial research into a topic area drawn from the American Studies half of their programme, they have two choices: they may write a 10,000 word 40 credit Dissertation or they may opt to write a 4,000 word 20 credit Research Project. If a student chooses to write a Research Project, they must also take a 20 credit Directed Research Unit (DRU), the assessment of which fosters independent research skills. The DRU for this programme is Thomas Jefferson and the Making of the American Republic.

## 12. Course Management

For each course, one of the academic departments owning one of the two subject halves will be designated the 'home' department. The home department is often, **but not always**, the first named of the subject combination, see section 9 above for this course's home. The home department will be the students' base and is responsible for providing the academic course leader, personal tutor and student support. A deputy course leader is appointed from the 'away' department.

The University operates a two-tier course management structure at department level, which monitors students' progression and achievement at unit level and award level. At University level, there is a dedicated Combined Honours Management Board, which reviews annually overall student experience, monitors student achievement and advises on the introduction and withdrawal of new course combinations.

## 13. Course Rationale

This degree allows students to combine their interest with reading, writing and the use of language with an interest in the Americas. Through taking English in combination with American Studies, students develop skills in analysis across a range of disciplines and in-depth knowledge of North America and South America in a regional and global context. The programme helps students develop key skills which, allied with intellectual and academic development, will provide a sound preparation for the world of work or further study.

English and American Studies at Portsmouth offers a lively multidisciplinary programme which includes core material with a wide variety of options. This allows students to determine the distinctiveness of their pattern of study, and the basic design of the course enables them to study both of the discipline subjects in equal amounts. At the end of the first year, students choose to continue with both English and American Studies in equal amounts (and graduate with BA English and American Studies) or choose to study either subject as a major (and graduate with English with American Studies or American Studies with English).

On this course students have the opportunity to spend a period abroad at one of our link universities in the USA or Mexico or on a work placement in Washington DC.

## 14. Educational Aims of the Course

- To provide a broad knowledge of literature and literary language from a range of periods before and after 1800 in a broad and balanced curriculum.
- To provide a detailed understanding of the main genres such as prose, poetry and drama.
- To provide an understanding of the relationship between text and its cultural and socio-historical context, and the role of literary texts in articulating and shaping values, ideas and identities.
- To provide the opportunity to study a substantial range of literary and non-fictional texts

- To engage students in the appreciation of English literature in a wider cultural context that includes popular forms, other literatures in the Anglophone world, and world literature.
- To offer consideration of the interaction of literary production and other forms of creative activity and media (performance, film, visual arts).
- To develop an understanding of a variety of theoretical and critical approaches, and an awareness of the role of critical traditions in shaping interpretation.
- To problematise the act of reading and to develop an awareness of the imaginative power of literary texts.
- To provide an intellectually stimulating and supportive learning and studying environment
- To foster enthusiasm for the subject as a continually evolving discipline, engage students in life-long learning in the subject area and encourage an appreciation of the subject's continuing social and cultural importance.
- To equip students with a range of subject-specific and transferable skills including conceptual, literacy and communication skills of value in graduate employment in a changing labour market
- To provide students with a basis for postgraduate study in English or related disciplines and for teachers of English.
- To enable students to acquire a sound knowledge and understanding of North America and Latin America past and present.
- To provide students with knowledge and understanding of North America and Latin America using a range of appropriate disciplinary or multidisciplinary approaches.
- To enable students to acquire an informed sense of the similarities and differences between areas, thus fostering cross-cultural and international perspectives.
- In addition, depending on whether the student spends part of the Third Year on study abroad or work placement in USA or Mexico.

## 15. Employability Statement

All single and 'home' combined honours students have a named personal tutor who will take responsibility for overseeing and/or providing general academic and pastoral support for their personal tutees throughout the year. Formal personal tutor/tutee interactions include:

**At Level 4**, two group meetings in induction week. Introduction to Narrative is a subject foundation unit ('skills plus') where students are introduced to core graduate academic and employability skills which are embedded in the discipline. This unit includes 12 weekly group meetings, which exceeds the minimum of eight specified in the Curriculum Framework Document. Students will also have at least two individual meetings with their personal tutor (which include personal and professional development planning, feedback on academic performance, referral to specialist student services where appropriate) during the academic year (usually in weeks 6 and 18), plus additional individual meetings on request.

**At Level 5**, two group meetings in induction week (which include re-induction, academic engagement, student responsibilities, subject specific matters); two group meetings in the Consolidation and Assessment Period (which include careers, PDP, graduate employability programme, research management and dissertation); two individual meetings with their personal tutor (which include personal and professional development planning, feedback on academic performance, referral to specialist student services where appropriate) during the academic year (usually in weeks 6 and 18) plus additional individual meetings on request.

**At Level 6**, two group meetings in induction week (which include re-induction, academic engagement, student responsibilities, subject specific matters, research management and dissertation) and at least two individual meetings as part of the dissertation supervision process (or if the personal tutor is not the supervisor, two separate scheduled meetings).

Personal tutorial support for 'away' combined honours students is provided by their 'home' department, but continuity and equivalence of support is maintained through liaison between the two course teams. English Literature has a dedicated Combined Honours tutor to support the liaison process.

**Employability skills** will be delivered (and assessed where applicable) throughout the curriculum. We will provide structured support to enable students to develop their employability skills from L4 to L6. Core units at each level will include most of the academic and employability skills that are listed in Annex 5 of the 2012 Curriculum Framework. In addition, some course teams will have relevant work-related units in the curriculum.

**Career management skills** specifically (as a subset of employability skills) are embedded throughout the curriculum.

**Work-Related Learning:** We provide opportunities for students to engage in work-related learning through active learning and the application of skills in work-related environments. This will consist of an understanding of working environments and the impact of globalisation on career goals (adapted to specific subject areas/disciplines where appropriate). In most subject areas of the Faculty, this will take place through simulated work-related environments in one or more core units. For some subject areas, this will involve real-world working environments.

**Internationalisation & Global Graduate Skills:**

The optional period of residence abroad in USA or Mexico, whether as university study or as a work placement, further enhances students' employability by providing opportunities for acquiring or improving their language skills in a country where a foreign language is spoken. It also provides students with opportunities to develop essential life skills including problem solving and inter-cultural awareness. Students wishing to undertake study abroad and/or placement based learning are fully supported by a combination of the departmental Placement and Internship Centre (PIC), the Year Abroad/Placement Tutor, designated Institutional Coordinators, or the programme Course Leader. Details of what students must do to complete this phase of the programme, where the study abroad or placement learning is credit bearing, are set out in the SLAS Placement Supplement Student Handbook on the Accredited Study Abroad Moodle site (<http://moodle.port.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=3935>).