



MA History of War, Culture and Society

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose

Course management 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. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification; however, changes may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, review and update of units and courses. Where this activity leads to significant changes to units and courses, there will be prior consultation of students and others, wherever possible, and the University will take all reasonable steps to minimize disruption to students. It is also possible that the University may not be able to offer a unit or course for reasons outside of its control, for example; the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the University will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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Course Details

1. Named Awards

MA in History of War, Culture and Society

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

C2294F and C2294P

To view units and course structures please visit 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. Accrediting Body

N/A

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

N/A

7. Document Control Information

Version: June 2017

8. Effective Session

2017-18

9. Author

Dr Karl Bell

10. Faculty

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

11. Department

School of Social, Historical and Literary Studies (SSHLS)

Curriculum

12. Educational Aims

- To provide a framework allowing students to follow a stimulating, flexible but coherent programme of study for the study of the relationship between war, culture and society between 1500 and 2000.
- To provide a flexible framework within which research students in relevant fields may acquire the research skills essential for the pursuit of their subject(s).

- To facilitate the acquisition of subject specific skills to enable students to pursue postgraduate study and research within their chosen specialised field.
- To equip postgraduates with the necessary transferable skills for lifelong learning and flexibility in the context of changing labour markets.
- To provide students with the skills and knowledge required to maximise career and postgraduate study opportunities.
- To provide an awareness of the need to conduct research ethically and safely.

13. Reference Points

The programme and outcomes have been developed taking account of:

- The University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Documents
- QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in HE
- The scholarship and research expertise of academic members of staff

14. General Learning Outcomes

Level 7

Master's degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
 - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
 - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
 - decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
- the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development

15. Learning Outcomes

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

- A.1 Focused, critical and up to date knowledge of historical scholarship on war, culture and society during the early modern and modern periods
- A.2 The relationship between war and society by evaluating patterns and continuity and change from the early modern to the modern era
- A.3 The impact that war had on culture and also the way changing cultures reflect and impact upon wars and perceptions of war
- A.4 Systematic approaches to constructing and interpreting the past
- A.5 How to build on students existing research skills, particularly an ability to handle a wide range of source materials
- A.6 Research Skills in the fields of planning, IT, bibliographic and literature surveys, ethical and legal issues, employment and personal development.

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:

- B.1 Demonstrate initiative and originality in addressing historical problems
- B.2 With critical awareness, undertake analysis of complex and contradictory areas of historical knowledge and communicate the outcome effectively.
- B.3 Critically evaluate historical research, advanced scholarship and methodologies, and where appropriate, argue alternative approaches
- B.4 Collate, synthesise and analyse materials from diverse historical sources, using knowledge and/or methodologies from the forefront of the discipline.
- B.5 Against a framework of relevant and current historiography, plan and conduct research through rough self-formulated questions.

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:

- C.1 To facilitate the acquisition of subject specific skills to enable students to pursue postgraduate study and research within their chosen specialised field
- C.2 Use critical skills in close reading and analysis of historiography and primary sources.
- C.3 Retrieve and select appropriate information from a range of sources;
- C.4 Select appropriate research methodologies;
- C.5 Use bibliographical skills appropriate to the discipline, including accurate and consistent use of scholarly conventions of presentation.

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to:

- D.1 Demonstrate advanced literacy and oral and written communication skills, including the ability to present a rhetorically effective, coherent, well-supported, and sustained argument;
- D.2 Demonstrate self-management, initiative and personal responsibility in designing and conducting significant research projects.
- D.3 Demonstrate a capacity to work cooperatively with, and possibly coordinate the efforts of other members of a team.
- D.4 Demonstrate an ability to work to deadlines.

16. Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

A1-A6 are delivered through taught core and optional units, tutor and student –led seminars, small group workshops, specialists from inside and outside the university, and a tutor-supported dissertation based on a research question and design developed by the student. The dissertation is supported through regular individual meetings with the dissertation supervisor or one-to-one online tutorials or email-based exchange to guide and direct students to relevant literature.

B1-B5 are developed through taught core and optional units. These will all encourage and prompt critical engagement with course literature and primary source materials, competing interpretations and experiences. Example activities include tutor and student-led seminars, student presentations, group discussion, questioning and interaction.

C1–C5 are all delivered through taught core and optional units. While all units will implicitly provide these practical, subject-specific skills the History Research Skills unit is designed to explicitly identify, enhance and reflect upon these skills. These practices will be developed through ongoing small group work, seminar discuss, primary source analysis, and the tutor-supervised dissertation.

Advanced literacy skills will be developed through the need to prepare reading, ideas and reflections prior to seminars and tutorials. Written communication skills, including the ability to construct a compelling argument, will be developed through the various written assessments (D1). Oral communication skills will be developed through small-group seminar discussions and individual and group presentations (D1 and D3). All assignments must be word-processed and students are expected to seek academic and technical sources of help and advice from a number of sources at different stages of the programme (D1). All students are required to take personal responsibility for managing their learning throughout and to plan and deliver assignments to the required deadlines (D2 and D4).

17. Assessment Strategy

A1-A6 will be assessed through a range of essays, reflective reports, individual and/or group presentations, and an extended individual research project (dissertation).

B1–B5 will be assessed through essays, and primary source-based presentations and research projects which will require deployment of a range of critical analytical skills, historiographical evaluation and bibliographic research skills.

C1–C5 are assessed through a range of written coursework assignments which require a practical demonstration of the skills identified above. The reflective report in History Research Skills requires a conscious assessment of these skills. The dissertation should reflect the culmination of these abilities and the practical application of the skills to a substantial research-based project.

D1–D4 will be assessed through a range of assessment tasks – individual and group presentations, essays, and the dissertation. The system of deadlines and associated penalties for late submission ensure student planning of time and academic tasks and encourages personal responsibility for own learning (D4).

18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

See [Unit Web Search](#)¹ for full details on the course structure and units

The programme is offered in two modes - full-time over 12 months and part-time over two calendar years, 24 months. Students enrol in September of each year and registration ends on 30th September of the subsequent relevant year.

The degree is based on the University of Portsmouth credit rating for taught Masters Degrees of 180 credits. Taught units are rated at 30 credits and the Dissertation is rated at 60 credits, as outlined below:

Core Units

Introduction to War and Society (30 credits)

History Research Skills (30 credits)

War, Culture and Leisure (30 credits)

Dissertation (60 credits)

Options

Conflicts in Context (30 credits) *or* Independent Study (30 credits)

¹ www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch

Award of the Postgraduate Certificate

To be considered for the award of a University Postgraduate Certificate, students must successfully complete assessments worth 60 credits.

Award of the Postgraduate Diploma

To be considered for the award of a University Postgraduate Diploma students must successfully complete assessments worth 120 credits.

Award of the M.A. degree

To be eligible for a Master's Degree students must acquire 180 credits.

19. Employability Statement

Employability skills, in terms of transferable skills, are delivered (and assessed where applicable) throughout the curriculum. Through seminar tasks, assessments, and personal tutor provision we provide structured support to enable students to develop their employability skills throughout the course. Through the engagement with archives and with external speakers from the Royal Navy Museum and Portsmouth Council (Record Office) we also provide opportunities for students to gain archive-related skills in work-related environments. All MA students are encouraged to attend the series of History research seminars delivered by academics, both from within the University of Portsmouth and from a wide range of external institutions. This provides students with the opportunity to develop their networking skills and make links with a broader sphere of postgraduate researchers and professional academics.

During the induction programme all students attend a presentation by Purple Door and will be made aware of the career service facilities offered by the University of Portsmouth. Students will also be made aware of faculty-wide careers events with employers from a range of relevant employment sectors during the year via the virtual learning environment and emails. Career management skills, as a subset of employability skills, are embedded in the History Research Skills unit. Students are introduced to career management skills (self-awareness, professional development planning, CV development etc) in order to get them thinking about their existing skills and career plans, particularly the need to be aware of deadlines for future applications. All these activities will be supported by the Personal Tutor system.

Course Management

20. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader.
- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course.
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance.
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc.
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK).
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC).
- Excellent library facilities.
- The University of Portsmouth has consistently been awarded an excellent rating for student support and guidance in a number of Quality Assurance Agency inspections.
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations etc. Additionally, copies of these material are available to students via the virtual learning environment.
- Written feedback is provided for all assessments. Students have the option of discussing feedback comments with tutors during their tutor hours or via email.
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all awards.

21. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

Normally an upper-second class honours degree in a relevant discipline or combination of disciplines, or an equivalent non-UK classification. Applicants with significant relevant experience, e.g. a background in education, media or other relevant profession, may be admitted with a slightly lower level of qualification.

B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

22. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies.
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme.
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports.
- Periodic Programme Review.
- Student Representatives and Student/Staff Consultative Committees.
- Staff Performance and Development Review.
- Peer Review and Development Framework.
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee.

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery.
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course.
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course.
- Head of Department.
- Associate Dean (Academic).
- Associate Dean (Students).
- Quality Assurance Committee.
- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners.

C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback

- Student Representation on Board of Studies.
- Student Staff Consultative Committees.
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires.
- University participates in external student surveys, eg National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and International Student Barometer (ISB).

D. Staff Development Priorities

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs

- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes
- New academic staff required to undertake appropriate University of Portsmouth learning and teaching programmes
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership
- Academic staff undertake initial and continuing professional development within the Academic Professional Excellence Framework (APEX) programme which is aligned with the Higher Education Academy (HEA)'s UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)
- Support staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages

23. Assessment Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth academic regulations will apply to this programme (see [Assessment and Regulations²](#)).

24. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- Oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards
- Review unit assessment strategy
- Sample assessment artefacts
- Present report to Unit Assessment Boards

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:

- Oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards
- Scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment
- Ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom

25. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

N/A

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

PDSQR November 2012 – The programme is reviewed within the university's programme of regular review including in ASQR and PDSQR. History single and combined honours together with its Masters provision underwent an External Periodic Review in November 2012. The review confirmed the 'fitness of purpose' of the History curriculum and the effectiveness of its annual monitoring and review processes.

C. Quality Assurance Agency

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (*for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015³](#)*).

D. Others

None.

² www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/assessmentandregulations/

³ www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf

26. Further Information

Further information may be found in:

- Student Handbook
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Prospectus
- [University of Portsmouth](http://www.port.ac.uk/)⁴ and [School of Social, Historical and Literary Studies](http://www.port.ac.uk/school-of-social-historical-and-literary-studies/)⁵ websites

⁴ www.port.ac.uk/

⁵ <http://www.port.ac.uk/school-of-social-historical-and-literary-studies/>