

Royal Holloway, University of London
Course specification for an undergraduate award
BA English and History (QV31)

Section 1 – Introduction to your course

This course specification is a formal document, which provides a summary of the main features of your course and the learning outcomes that you might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if you take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. Further information is contained in the University prospectus, and in various handbooks, all of which you will be able to access online. Alternatively, further information on the University's academic regulations and policies can be found [here](#). Further information on the University's Admissions Policy can be found [here](#).

Your degree course in English and History is delivered in three stages, each of which comprises one year of full-time study during which you must follow modules to the value of 120 credits. The courses provide progressive structures in which you are able to gain ever-wider knowledge and understanding, and appropriate skills. The courses contain a combination of mandatory modules to introduce you to historical periods and processes, to the principal literary genres, and to contemporary critical and theoretical approaches, with a range of stage two and three specialist options. In each case the structure encourages you, in stage two and three, to develop your own interests through informed choice among specialist options. Whilst the development of fundamental disciplinary-specific skills are emphasised in the mandatory modules, the specialist options provide focused opportunities to examine the application of these skills. In stage three all students on this course are required to write a dissertation or extended essay in one of the departments.

While Royal Holloway keeps all the information made available under review, courses and the availability of individual modules, especially optional modules are necessarily subject to change at any time, and you are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect your decision to follow a specific course. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform you as soon as is practicable of any significant changes which might affect your studies.

The following is a brief description for some of the most important terminology for understanding the content of this document:

Degree course – May also be referred to as 'degree programme' or simply 'programme', these terms refer to the qualification you will be awarded upon successful completion of your studies.

Module – May also be referred to as 'course', this refers to the individual units you will study each year to complete your degree course. Undergraduate degrees at Royal Holloway comprise a combination of modules in multiples of 15 credits to the value of 120 credits per year. On some degree courses a certain number of optional modules must be passed for a particular degree title.

Section 2 – Course details			
Date of specification update	August 2024	Location of study	Egham Campus
Course award and title	BA English and History	Level of study	Undergraduate
Course code	2615	UCAS code	QV31
Year of entry	2025/26		
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department or school	English	Other departments or schools involved in teaching the course	History
Mode(s) of attendance	Full-time or part-time	Duration of the course	Three years or six years
Accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirement(s)	N/A		
Link to Coursefinder for further information:	https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/	For queries on admissions:	https://royalholloway.ac.uk/applicationquery

Section 3 – Degree course structure

3.1 Mandatory module information
 The following table summarises the mandatory modules which students must take in each year of study

Year	Module code	Module title	Credits	FHEQ level	Module status (Mandatory Condonable MC or Mandatory Non-Condonable MNC)
1	EN1001	English: Encountering Medieval Literature: From <i>Beowulf</i> to Chaucer	15	4	MC
1	EN1106	English: Shakespeare	15	4	MC
1	EN1105	English: Literature and Crisis	30	4	MC
1	HS1004	History: History in the Making	30	4	MC

This table sets out the most important information for the mandatory modules on your degree course. These modules are central to achieving your learning outcomes, so they are compulsory, and all students on your degree course will be required to take them. You will be automatically registered for these modules each year. Mandatory modules fall into two categories: 'condonable' or 'non-condonable'.

In the case of mandatory 'non-condonable' (MNC) modules, you must pass the module before you can proceed to the next year of your course, or to successfully graduate with a particular degree title. In the case of mandatory 'condonable' (MC) modules, these must be taken but you can still progress or graduate even if you do not pass them. Please note that although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, changes to your degree course may be made where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events. For example: where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of external advisors, to enhance academic provision.

3.2 Optional modules

In addition to mandatory modules, there will be a number of optional modules available during the course of your degree. Although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, new options may be offered or existing ones may be withdrawn. For example where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of External Advisors, to enhance academic provision. There may be additional requirements around option selection; please contact the Department for further information.

In your **first year**, in addition to the mandatory modules you must choose one History optional 'Gateway' modules.

From the **English** Department students should take at least 15 credits focussing on literature from before 1780 (excluding Shakespeare) in either their second or third year of study.

From the **History** Department you must take one 30-credit 'Further Subject' module. You can then take two 15-credit Survey modules **OR** one 15-credit Survey module and HS2300 Research Essay / Public History Project (15 credits) attached to the Further Subject.

In your **third year** you follow one of two pathways, depending on whether you decide to write your dissertation in English or in History:

Pathway A (English dissertation)

You take the equivalent of 30 credits in English and the English freestanding dissertation (30 credits)

You also take two taught Special Subject module (a total of 60 credits) in History, taught over both terms.

Pathway B (History dissertation)

You take two final year modules in English (60 credits)

You take one History taught 'Special Subject' module (30 credits) plus HS3003 'Dissertation in History' (30 credits), which is attached to the special subject module.

You cannot opt to take a dissertation in both departments, but must take a dissertation in either English or History.

Section 4 - Progressing through each year of your degree course

For further information on the progression and award requirements for your degree, please refer to Royal Holloway's [Academic Regulations](#).

Progression throughout the year/s is monitored through performance in summative or formative coursework assignments. Please note that if you hold a Student Visa and you choose to leave (or are required to leave because of non-progression) or complete early (before the course end date stated on your CAS), then this will be reported to UKVI.

All first year students on single, joint or combined honours courses offered all or in part by the School of Humanities, School of Performing and Digital Arts, or department of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy are required to pass a Moodle-based writing skills quiz in order to progress into the second year of study. The pass mark for the test is 60%. Certificates of Distinction are awarded to students who achieve at least 80% in the quiz. Students may attempt the quiz as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who meet the requirements for progression as stipulated in the [Academic Taught Regulations](#) but fail to pass the Moodle-based Academic Integrity module will not be permitted to progress into their second year of academic study.

Part-time students would normally be expected to take the following:

Year One (Stage One A): EN1001 and EN1106 or EN1105 plus HS1004 History in the Making

Year Two (Stage One B): EN1001 and EN1106 or EN1105 plus one of the History Gateway optional modules

Year Three (Stage Two A): Either one of EN2010/EN2212/EN2213/EN2324/EN2325 or optional modules to the value of 30 credits **and either** two Survey modules (15 credits, one in each term) from the list of modules offered by the History Department to the total value of 30 credits, **or** a Further Subject module in History (30 credits)

Year Four (Stage Two B): Either one of EN2010/EN2212/EN2213/EN2324/EN2325 (if not taken at Stage 2A) or optional modules to the value of 30 credits **and** either a Further Subject module in History (30 credits), if not taken in Stage Two A, **or** one Survey module (15 credits, Term 1 or term 2) and HS2300 Research Essay / Public History Project in History (15 credits, taught over both terms)

Year Five and Six (Stage Three): An appropriate combination of modules in line with the requirements stated above, normally including a dissertation in either subject or in a Special Author/ Topic module. Should students choose to take a dissertation in History it must be attached to a special subject module.

BA English and History with an International Year (4 years)

Stage one:

As Stage one, listed above.

Stage two:

As Stage two, listed above.

Stage three, part 1 - Extra-curricular year:**

You must take modules at an overseas university nominated through the Student Exchange Courses. The equivalent of a full academic load at the overseas university must be taken. The modules to be taken overseas are to be agreed with the Tutor for International Studies in History. The marks achieved are converted into equivalent University marks and count as a thirteenth unit, HS3400. This will contribute 20% to the final stage three marks.

Stage three, part 2 – Final year in the History Department:

As Stage three, listed above. These modules will contribute 80% to the final stage three marks.

**Students commencing stage three, part 1 on this four year course will not be permitted to transfer back to one of the three year courses offered by the Department of History. The Department will give consideration in the case of extreme hardship, documented by extenuating circumstances and supporting material, as it normally would, should a student not be able to complete their year abroad

Section 5 – Educational aims of the course

The aims of this course are:

- to enable you to develop independent critical thinking and judgement;
- to provide an attractive, flexible and varied curriculum that draws extensively on the research expertise of staff in the Departments of English and History;
- to engage you imaginatively in the process of critically reading, analysing, and demonstrating knowledge of a range of literary, historical and critical texts;
- to encourage you to appreciate the expressive resources of language;
- to demonstrate a deep understanding of a range of approaches, issues and concepts in both History and English Literature;
- to encourage an awareness of literature's historical context and an appreciation of its continuing social and cultural importance;
- to provide a sound and extensive basis for the study of History and English by meeting the general requirements of the History and English subject benchmarking statements in the development of knowledge and understanding through discipline-specific and generic skills.
- to encourage you to take progressive responsibility for your own study through negotiating subject areas of specialism, via the informed choice of options and the writing of a dissertation or extended essay in your final year, and which in turn provides a firm foundation for postgraduate study and research;
- to develop in you a range of personal attributes relevant to the world beyond higher education: the ability to engage in lifelong learning, to consider ethics and values, and to contribute to the wider community;
- to enable you to acquire and demonstrate transferable skills necessary for successful career development.

Section 6 - Course learning outcomes			
In general terms, the courses provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. (<i>Categories – Knowledge and understanding (K), Skills and other attributes (S), and Transferable skills (*)</i>)			
Course Learning Outcome	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
1/ Subject Knowledge [English and History]	1.4 Understand and show awareness of the variety of approaches and methods taken in the production and evolution of historical and literary writing over time; understand the ways that historical knowledge and literary writing can inform the present.	1.5 Discuss and compare literature from a range of literary traditions, genres, and periods, from the 1500s to the 20 th century; reflect critically on the practices and uses of historical knowledge both within and beyond the academy.	1.6 Develop specialist knowledge in focused areas of interest, such as specific periods or genres.
2/ To utilise primary and secondary sources appropriately [English and History]	2.4 Understand and show awareness of the variety of approaches and methods taken in the production and evolution of literary and historical writing over time;	2.5 Apply the key concepts, themes and theories used in historical study [historiography] and literary criticism to particular (literary) texts and (historical) contexts; reflect critically on some of the practices and uses of knowledge and interpretation.	2.6 Apply critical self-reflexivity to the conceptual approaches adopted in one's own writing and the methods of one's own research; construct ethically-aware historical and literary research; apply high levels of independence and initiative in problem-solving.
3/ Critical Terminology and Theoretical Approaches to Literature [English]	3.4 recognise core technical, critical, and theoretical terms and ideas characteristic of literary study.	3.5 Engage with technical, critical, and theoretical terms and ideas in the discussion of literature.	3.6 Articulate specialist knowledge and a critical understanding of technical, critical, and theoretical terms and ideas in focused areas of interest.
4/ Writing skills [English and History]	4.1 Write clearly, accurately, and effectively about literary and historical topics.	4.2 Articulate a critical understanding of complex texts and ideas, demonstrating awareness of different registers and different genres of critical prose (e.g. essay, blog post, review, etc).	4.3 Demonstrate a strong command of written English, expressing sophisticated ideas about literary, critical, and historical works in clear, fluent, and stylish prose appropriate to formal and a wide range of other registers.
5/ Research skills [English and History]	Recognise and present primary and secondary texts and sources in a variety of formats and across a diverse range of subjects, both geographically and chronologically.	Find and evaluate previous scholarship, through guided and independent encounters. Engage with technical, critical, and theoretical terms and ideas in the discussion of literature and history.	Apply scholarly bibliographic skills appropriate to focused areas of interest in an independent research project or dissertation. Evaluate and synthesise the professionalism, scholarly value and significance of works by historians; critically

			evaluate the intertextuality of primary and secondary historical sources.
6/	Engaged Humanities K6 display a breadth and depth of subject knowledge, and engage with developing subject conversations and their currency in cultural discourse now.	recall foundational knowledge of the subject area, and use core subject skills.	recognise and classify focussed sub-fields within the subject area, and identify and respond to relevant critical materials and contexts.
7/	Applied Humanities S1 understand the relevance of subject skills to professional and applied contexts, and how to apply that knowledge in the future.	recognise and identify subject skills as transferable to work-based situations and competencies.	generate outputs in a variety of formats which have application to work-based uses and/or particular audiences and/or functions.
8/	Global Humanities S2 understand and enact intercultural awareness and competencies.	identify and respond to diverse cultural contexts and viewpoints.	understand and differentiate the circumstances and contexts that give rise to diverse viewpoints and world views.

Section 7 - Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning on your course is closely informed by the active research of staff, particularly in the areas of English and History. In general terms, the course provides an opportunity for you to develop and demonstrate the learning outcomes detailed herein.

The main methods used to develop knowledge and understanding are: formal lectures by academic staff, seminars and tutorials based on a combination of staff-led sessions and student participation (including oral presentations), study groups, and individual consultations and supervisions with appropriate academic staff. There is also the option of guided independent research and study for the final-year dissertation.

Assessment will be by a combination of formal examinations, assessed coursework essays, and online tests and exercises, as indicated in individual Module Specifications. Full details of the assessments for individual modules can be obtained from the Department of [English](#) and the Department of [History](#).

Contact hours come in various forms and may take the form of time spent with a member of staff in a lecture or seminar with other students. Contact hours may also be laboratory or, studio-based sessions, project supervision with a member of staff, or discussion through a virtual learning environment (VLE). These contact hours may be with a lecturer or teaching assistant, but they may also be with a technician, or specialist support staff.

The way in which each module on your degree course is assessed will also vary. Assessments designated as 'summative' will receive a mark which will count towards your overall mark for the module, and potentially your degree classification, depending on your year of study. On successful completion of the module you will gain the credits listed.

More detailed information on modules, including teaching and learning methods, and methods of assessment, can be found via the online [Module Catalogue](#). The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed regularly by the university, and may also be checked routinely by external agencies.

Section 8 – Additional costs

There are no single associated costs greater than £50 per item on this degree course.

These estimated costs relate to studying this particular degree course at Royal Holloway. General costs such as accommodation, food, books and other learning materials and printing etc., have not been included, but further information is available on our website.

Section 9 – Indicators of quality and standards	
QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	4-6
Your course is designed in accordance with the FHEQ to ensure your qualification is awarded on the basis of nationally established standards of achievement, for both outcomes and attainment. The qualification descriptors within the FHEQ set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of individual qualifications. The qualification descriptors contained in the FHEQ exemplify the outcomes and attributes expected of learning that results in the award of higher education qualifications. These outcomes represent the integration of various learning experiences resulting from designated and coherent courses of study.	
QAA Subject benchmark statement(s)	http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of courses in a specific subject or subject area. They also represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in terms of the attributes and capabilities that those possessing qualifications should have demonstrated.	

Section 10– Intermediate exit awards (where available)		
You may be eligible for an intermediate exit award if you complete part of the course as detailed in this document. Any additional criteria (e.g. mandatory modules, credit requirements) for intermediate awards is outlined in the sections below.		
Award	Criteria	Awarding body
Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE)	Pass in 210 credits of which at least 90 must be at or above FHEQ Level 4 and at least 120 of which must be at or above FHEQ Level 5	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College
Certificate in Higher Education (CertHE)	Pass in 120 credits of which at least 90 must be at or above FHEQ Level 4	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College