



Programme Specification

A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin a taught programme of study leading to an award from
The University of Sheffield

This programme specification covers the subject curriculum in **History** for the following dual honours degree programmes and should be read in conjunction with the relevant specification for the second subject:

1. Programme Titles	2. Programme Codes	3. JACS Codes
Archaeology and History	AAPU02	F400
French and History	FREU09	R100
German and History	GERU08	R200
History and Russian	HSTU02	V100
History and Hispanic Studies	HSTU03	V100
History and Philosophy	HSTU07	V100
English and History	LITU03	Q300
4	Level of Study	Undergraduate
5a	Final Qualification	Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA Hons)
5b	QAA FHEQ Level	Honours
6	Intermediate Qualifications	None
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	Faculty	Arts and Humanities
9	Co-ordinating Department	History in the case of the degrees with Hispanic Studies, Philosophy and Russian. The remaining degrees are co-ordinated by the partner departments.
10	Other Departments involved in teaching in the subject	None
11	Mode of Attendance	Full-time
12	Duration of the Programmes	Three years for the degrees with Archaeology, English and Philosophy; Four years (including year abroad between Levels 2 and 3) for the remaining degrees
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	None
14	Date of production/revision	May 2011

Dual Degrees

The University of Sheffield defines a dual degree as the independent study of two parallel subjects. Dual degrees offer students the flexibility to choose a programme of study that reflects their interests and gives the opportunity to develop detailed knowledge and key skills in two major subjects. Whilst the two subjects may be taught independently, they will complement, inform and illuminate one another. Where there are two programme specifications for dual degrees, one for each half of the programme, and students should refer to both documents for a full description of the whole programme. Where there are clear links between the two subjects, details will be included in Sections 15 and 20 of the programme specifications. However, there are some single programme specifications for dual degree combinations where there is a substantial degree of integration between the two subjects.

15. Background to the programmes and subject area

Knowledge and understanding of the human past is of incalculable value both to the individual and to society. Studying history provides a distinctive education by providing a sense of the past and its separation from the present, together with an awareness of the development over time of different values, systems and societies. Degree-level study in history instils a respect for historical context and evidence, a greater awareness of the

historical processes unfolding in our own time, and a deeper understanding of the varied traditions current today.

The Department of History at the University of Sheffield is one of the most active centres for teaching and historical research in the country. In the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise we were in tenth position nationally ranked by the proportion of our research judged 'world-leading': 35% of our research was judged to be in this category (4*), and 30% to be internationally excellent (3*). A full-time academic staff complement of 30 gives the Department both chronological and geographical coverage. Our **research interests** extend chronologically from late antique to contemporary history; geographically from the UK to Western, Southern, Central and Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean, Africa, South Asia, the USA, and Central America; and thematically to include political, economic, social, cultural and intellectual history, with a distinct specialism in the application of digital technologies to historical research. The Department's unique composition provides the interdisciplinary scope to develop new ways of dealing with complex source materials and promote research perspectives across chronological and geographical divides.

The Department of History continues to play a pioneering role in making historical sources available in electronic form. Several projects demonstrate the way in which teaching and research are inter-linked. These include Connected Histories: Sources for Building British History 1500-1900, The Proceedings of the Old Bailey: London's Criminal Court 1674-1913 [<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/>], London Lives, 1690-1800 [<http://www.londonlives.org>] and the American History wiki [<http://history.dept.shef.ac.uk/wikiamerica/>]. The Department is committed to public history and the wide dissemination of historical scholarship. Staff take part in media work on television, radio and the print media. They also give public lectures, film talks and make school visits. Colleagues also engage in knowledge exchange projects with external partners, such as Karen Harvey's partnership work with the Sheffield Museums and Galleries Trust.

Completing a dual honours degree in History at Sheffield thus provides many opportunities for acquiring and refining ICT and other transferable skills as well as a high level of historical knowledge and understanding. The skills and intellectual training provided by a degree in history are valued by employers. In recent years, graduates from the Department have gone on to follow careers in marketing and retail, accountancy, media, the civil service and the law, as well as in education, museums and libraries, tourism and the heritage industry.

16. Subject aims

Degree programmes offered by the Department of History have the following general aims consonant with the University of Sheffield's Mission Statement and the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for History:

1. To provide high quality teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels that is informed and invigorated by research and scholarship and alert to the benefits of student-centred learning.
2. To sustain a culture of research and learning that promotes the free pursuit of knowledge, impartial analysis and the acquisition of informed attitudes to the study of the past.
3. To maintain broad access to its programmes of study for students from a wide range of educational and social backgrounds.
4. To respond to the diversity of student interests by offering an appropriate level of student choice at each level of study, enabling them to pursue chronologically and geographically diverse fields of study and by seeking to assist qualified students, wherever possible, to change to degree programmes that better fulfil their needs.
5. To equip students with the skills that will prepare them for employment or for further study.

17. Subject learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding:	
K1	The ability to reflect upon a wide range of historical knowledge about a range of regions in remote and recent periods of time.
K2	An understanding of the significance of historiographical developments since the professionalisation of the discipline.
K3	The development of an awareness of comparative and thematic approaches to the study of the past and an understanding of the delicacy and complexity of this task.
K4	Comprehension of the distinctiveness of the discipline of history, reflecting on its relevance in the contemporary world.
K5	The ability to read widely and critically within the historical literature, and to demonstrate an awareness of History as a literary discipline.

K6	Recognition of the importance of historical debate, with an understanding of historical analysis and the evaluation of historians' arguments.
Skills and other attributes:	
S1	The ability to write and speak about the past in good English, communicating historical arguments and providing appropriate evidence (including non-textual evidence) to support them, referencing the sources used.
S2	The ability to use bibliographic and research skills in order to locate and critically evaluate information sources, including pages on the internet reflecting a critical appreciation of the range of sources for historical study.
S3	The ability to assimilate material from a range of sources and use it to construct and sustain logical arguments both orally and in written exercises of varying length.
S4	The ability to recognise, critique and analyse different kinds of primary sources so enabling their use in the construction of historical arguments.
S5	The ability to formulate independent and informed historical judgements.
S6	The ability to respond constructively to debate and criticism.
S7	Familiarity with a range of IT skills, encompassing computer programmes and their application, electronic sources for research and the internet as well as word processing and email.
S8	Skills in effective time-management, including the ability to work productively alone and in groups.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

Development of the learning outcomes is promoted through the following teaching and learning methods:

Induction procedures at Level 1 are concentrated mainly in Intro Week and include a meeting with the Personal Tutor, subject-specific library and ICT induction sessions, general computer training (if needed) and a half-day programme of talks by key staff members which cover issues such as pastoral care, teaching methods and learning strategies. Further study skills advice, including a Coursework Style Guide, is available to all students via the Department's website [http://www.shef.ac.uk/history/current_students/undergraduate]

Formal lectures introduce students to large bodies of historical material and the principal arguments in particular fields. They are used extensively at Level 1, less frequently at Level 2 and sparingly at Level 3. At all Levels, lectures are used to impart knowledge in ways that reflect K1-4 and K 6 above.

Regular **small-group seminars** are used throughout the programme to encourage the oral expression and exchange of views, the concise summary of complex arguments and the ability to respond constructively to the presentation of alternative views. Some seminars are discussion classes, whether of a particular historical problem or period, or of methodological issues; others are dedicated to the interpretation of various kinds of primary source material (both textual and non-textual). They may be staff or student-led, and encompass group discussion, small-group work or individual assignments. Seminar teaching thus contributes both to students' attainment of historical knowledge and understanding (K1-6) and to the acquisition of key skills (S1-6).

Guided reading is a principal component of independent study. It allows students to develop and reinforce the awareness of historical knowledge and debate (K1-3, K 6) acquired from lectures and seminars as well as furthering their bibliographic and research skills and making effective use of library and internet resources (S2, S7, S8).

Written assignments encourage students to develop their ability to summarise material, to present coherent arguments in proper English prose, and to support their arguments with appropriate evidence. Preparing such assignments, particularly researching and reading around the topic or question set, is essential to the acquisition of historical knowledge and understanding as set out above (K1-6). As both the form and the length of written assignments varies -- from book reviews and exercises on documentary sources through essays to, in some dual schools, dissertations -- students develop a range of learning and time-management strategies in response to them (S1-5, 8). Written assignments also encourage the development of word processing skills as students are expected to present their work professionally, using the full scholarly apparatus (i.e. footnotes and stratified bibliography). These requirements are set out in further detail in the Department's Coursework Style Guide (S1, S7).

Individual tutorial guidance is given to those Dual Honours students who choose to undertake the optional Dissertation to enable them better to attain the learning outcomes detailed above.

Opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes are provided through the following assessment methods:

All forms of assessment used within the Department of History evaluate students' acquisition of historical knowledge and understanding, particularly K1, K2, K3, K6. Formative assessment is used regularly at all Levels both to monitor students' progress and to provide learners with the feedback they need in order to evaluate their own progress and to reflect upon the historical understanding they have acquired (K1). Feedback on both coursework and seminar performance encourages students to respond effectively and positively to constructive criticism by reflecting both on their skills of argument and presentation and on the coherence of their understanding of particular historical problems (S5-6).

All assessment which contributes marks towards the degree, and therefore has a summative as well as formative function, is marked in accordance with marking criteria which are published in both the undergraduate student handbook and on the Department's website

http://www.shef.ac.uk/history/current_students/undergraduate/index

Assessment of **oral performance** in seminars is used to test the students' ability to communicate effectively in group discussion, to formulate, explain and defend coherent historical arguments and to respond to the arguments of others while respecting their opinions (S1, S5, S6). The oral assessment mark contributes to the final module mark in all Level 1 courses, as seminar discussion is seen as a fundamental skill that students need to acquire at this level, and also in the Document Option at Level 2 and the Comparative Option at level 3, to ensure that students continue to develop this skill.

Essays are used to test the students' acquisition of key skills (S2, S3, S7, S8) as well as their historical knowledge and understanding (K5-6). Shorter pieces of written work such as **book reviews** and **document exercises** are used to evaluate skills in source criticism (S4). Assessed coursework -- principally in the form of essays -- contributes towards final marks in most modules, and therefore has a summative as well as a formative function.

Other forms of summative assessment used in the Department are **extended essays (which may include the Level 2 Course Assignment)** and the option of a 20 credit **Dissertation** at Level 3. The Dissertation demonstrates students' ability to work independently (S8) to define and complete extended research projects (K5-6, S5), presenting the results in a professional fashion (S1). The Dissertation also tests the ability to analyse a body of primary source material (S4).

Examinations are used to test the students' abilities to draw upon memory and to write coherent, informed answers under pressure of time, while demonstrating an awareness of the range of relevant evidence and of historical scholarship (K6, S1, S3). Reflective thinking (K4) is specifically assessed in the Level 3 module 'The Uses of History', which is optional for dual honours students. The Department has a Code of Examining Practice to ensure that examining procedures are moderated and regulated.

Over the course of the degree, the mixture of assessment practices in history modules changes to reflect the progressive development of student skills. At Level 1 -- which prepares students for Honours level study -- examinations provide 50% of the module mark, with essays at 33% and oral assessment 17%. At Level 2 this same assessment combination is retained in the Document Option, although the oral assessment derives from an element of group work and more intensive work on source analysis, but otherwise the focus shifts towards testing students' analytical abilities in unseen examinations (67% of the module mark in other Options) and essays (33%), with the Course Assignment providing a new element of extended written work. At Level 3, the focus is on collaborative seminar work rather than essay writing. Level 3 seminars are regularly student-led, particularly in the Special Subject. The double-weighted Special Subject is assessed solely by unseen examinations in the form of document papers (to test students' ability in the recognition and analysis of primary source material) and essay papers, although the Comparative Option (25%) and 'The Uses of History' (33%) include coursework essays within their assessment. The possibility of taking a 20-credit Dissertation module allows students to develop their abilities in source criticism and extended writing. Written and oral skills are assessed at all Levels, even when the marks do not contribute towards the final module mark.

19. Reference points

The learning outcomes have been developed to reflect the following points of reference:

Subject Benchmark Statements

<http://www.gaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx>

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (2008)

<http://www.gaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/The-framework-for-higher-education-qualifications-in-England-Wales-and-Northern-Ireland.aspx>

University Strategic Plan

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/strategicplan>

Learning and Teaching Strategy (2011-16)

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/lets/staff/lts>

The teaching ethos of the Department of History as articulated through its Teaching Committee and the annual Away Days held to reflect upon Department practice in teaching and research.

The research interests of academic staff and the Department's research strategy.

20. Programme structures and regulations

The Dual Honours degree programmes train students in historical enquiry, developing an increasingly rigorous approach to the discipline.

At Level 1, a compulsory module, 'Paths from Antiquity to Modernity', introduces students to the study of history at degree level by fostering a broad understanding of historical developments in the West since the fall of Rome, promoting an awareness of periodisation and encouraging reflection on the nature of historical change. 'Paths' is taught via MOLE, so improving students' ICT skills. Students must also take at least one of the other Level 1 modules offered in the Department, all of which focus on period study. Skills teaching is embedded in all Level 1 modules offered in the Department, and this is reflected in the essay profile form used at Level 1. Dual Honours students also take at least 40 credits with the partner department. The remaining 40 credits are unrestricted.

At Level 2, Dual Honours students take 'Historians and History' and a further two modules chosen from a list of options, one of which may be a Document Option. There is also the opportunity to take the Course Assignment module, HST209. 20 credits may be taken outside the partner Departments.

With the exception Archaeology and History, which has its own separate requirements (<http://www.governance.dept.shf.ac.uk/arts/a-ug-aap.pdf>), at Level 3 students may choose one of two routes: students opting for Stream A take a 40 credit Special Subject module, concentrating on source criticism and the study of primary documentation, accompanied by either a 20 credit dissertation, a Comparative Option, or the module 'The Uses of History'; students opting for Stream B take a Comparative Option, with a 20 credit dissertation and 'The Uses of History'. There are no unrestricted modules on the history side at this Level.

Overall, the degree programme provides the context in which the defined learning outcomes may be achieved, and progresses from solid foundations in historical study to a more rigorous and reflective understanding of the study of the past.

Detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules are published in the University Calendar available on-line at <http://www.shf.ac.uk/govern/calendar/regs.html>.

21. Student development over the course of study

Progression through the history component of the programme structure is defined by the Learning Outcomes set for each level of study in the Department of History.

Level 1

- Acquiring the basic skills of historical criticism
- A developing ability to search for and to analyse secondary literature and some primary sources in order to write critically and cogently about historical issues
- Recognising differing and conflicting interpretations of long periods of history
- Attaining a heightened understanding of historical periodisation

- A developing ability to present material orally and to discuss historical conclusions

Level 2

- Acquiring further generic and specific historical skills
- Recognising further chronological, geographical and theoretical perspectives
- A developing understanding of contrasting approaches to the study of history
- Also, depending on the modules chosen by the student:
- Acquiring familiarity with source criticism skills and the intensive analysis of primary source materials
- Acquiring the skills necessary to research, complete and present a piece of independent writing.

Level 3

- Refining further historical skills through the specialised study of primary source materials
- Developing further the skills necessary for the detailed and critical study of primary sources
- Completing, under guidance, a sustained piece of independent research and writing
- Learning to apply detailed knowledge of specific historical subjects in a broad, comparative and theoretically-informed manner
- Reflecting upon the experience of studying History to degree level and its social and political uses

(For dual honours students, not all of these may apply, depending on the choice of modules). The history curriculum, as set out in the University Calendar and as outlined in section 20 above, has been designed to enable students to achieve the learning outcomes of the Department of History, following the progression detailed above. Full details of the curriculum are available via the Department website [<http://www.shef.ac.uk/history/>].

The current structure and learning outcomes were developed through a far-reaching process of curriculum review carried out between 1996-99 and 2006-9 which involved academic staff, external examiners, and student representatives. The revised curriculum developed in 1996-99 differentiated more clearly between learning outcomes at each Level of study and gave greater coherence to the overall degree programme. The further revisions in 2006-9 have been prompted by the need to refine and develop existing courses on the basis of student feedback, and the need to respond to the university's introduction of endweighting of the degree programme by reducing the resultant imbalance in assessment created by the preponderance of document-centred courses at Level 3. Two new types of module – the Level 2 Document Option and the Level 3 Comparative Option – have been developed to ensure that the balance of module content and assessment in each year and in the overall programme properly reflects the range of skills and learning outcomes that the programme has been designed to promote. One outcome of the 2006-9 reforms was the introduction of greater flexibility and choice in the modules open to dual honours students at levels 2 and 3.

22. Criteria for admission to the programmes

Detailed information regarding admission to the all the Department's dual degree programmes is available in the University's On-Line Prospectus at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/prospective/>.

23. Additional information

Please refer to the Department's web pages at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/history>.

This specification represents a concise statement about the main features of the programme and should be considered alongside other sources of information provided by the teaching department(s) and the University. In addition to programme specific information, further information about studying at The University of Sheffield can be accessed via our Student Services web site at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssid>.