

Royal Holloway, University of London
Course specification for a postgraduate award
MA in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies (1250)

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 College prospectus, and in various handbooks, all of which you will be able to access online. Alternatively, further information on the College's academic regulations and policies can be found [here](#). Further information on the College's Admissions Policy can be found [here](#).

The Masters course is delivered over one year of full-time study (52 weeks) or up to five of part-time study (260 weeks). On successful completion of the course you should have an understanding of the area of the MA at a level appropriate for a postgraduate qualification. Whilst being a self-contained degree in its own right, the course provides suitable and recognised qualifications for entry to PhD study in the same or a closely related field.

The MA in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies is an intercollegiate degree course of the University of London, taught by the Departments of Classics, Royal Holloway, University of London, and University College London. Optional modules may be drawn from related provision offered by the Institute of Classical Studies and the Department of Classics, King's College London. Teaching is divided between the individual colleges and the Institute of Classical Studies.

You must take one language testing module of 30 credits, one 30 credit or two 15 credits approved skills module/s, the 15 credits core module Research Methods in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies, one 30 credit or two 15 credits module/s from a list of dedicated modules and a dissertation of 60 credits. You may include, subject to the approval of the Course Director, an appropriate module from any other MA course within the University of London.

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 brief description for some of the most important terminology for understanding the content of this document:

Degree course – Also referred to as 'course', this term refers to the qualification you will be awarded upon successful completion of your studies. 'Courses' were formerly known as 'programmes' at Royal Holloway.

Module – This refers to the credits you will study each year to complete your degree course. Postgraduate taught degrees at Royal Holloway comprise 180 credits. On some degree courses a certain number of optional modules must be passed for a particular degree title. 'Modules' were formerly known as 'course units' at Royal Holloway.

Section 2 – Course details			
Date of specification update	November 2023	Location of study	Egham Campus/Bedford Square/other London Colleges
Course award and title	MA in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies	Level of study	Postgraduate
Course code	1250	Year of entry	2024/25
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department/ School	History, School of Humanities	Other departments or schools involved in teaching the course	Classics, School of Humanities
Mode(s) of attendance	Full-time / Part-time	Duration of the course	One year (52 weeks) full-time Two to five years (104 - 260 weeks) part-time
Accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirement(s)	N/A	For queries on admissions:	https://royalholloway.ac.uk/applicationquery
Link to Coursefinder for further information:	https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/		

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

Module code	Module title	Credits	FHEQ level	Module status (see section 6)
HS5125	Dissertation in the Field of Late and Antique Byzantine Studies	60	7	MNC
HS5120	Research Methods in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies	15	7	MC
	Greek or Latin Language (Beginners, Intermediate or Advanced level)	30	7	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. Mandatory modules fall into two categories; 'condonable' or 'non-condonable'.

In the case of mandatory 'non-condonable' (MNC) modules, you must pass the module to successfully graduate with a particular degree title, or before you can proceed to the next year of your course where studying part-time. 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 (see [Academic Regulations](#) on condonable fails). 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. The following table lists a selection of optional modules that are likely to be available. However, not all may be available every year. 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, so it is important that this specification is read alongside your department's Student Handbook, which you can normally access via Moodle.

3.3 Optional module requirements

You must choose optional modules to the value of **45 credits** from the list provided by the Department on an annual basis.

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 (oral presentations, contributions to seminar discussion and coursework). 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 postgraduate taught students are required to take and pass the non-credit bearing Moodle-based Academic Integrity module SS1001 in order to be awarded. The pass mark for the module assessment is stated in the on-line Academic Integrity Moodle module. Students may attempt the assessment as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who otherwise meet the requirements for award as stipulated in the [College's Postgraduate Taught Regulations](#) (Section 15: Consideration and classification of candidates for the award) but fail to pass the Moodle-based Academic Integrity module will not be awarded.

The part-time course can be taken over two to five years beginning in September of year one. Part-time students normally take the Greek or language skills module, the research skills module and methods techniques seminar in year one and the other modules and elements in year 2.

Section 5 – Educational aims of the course

The aims of the course are:

- to enable you to explore the diverse range of ancient and medieval world studies and to specialise in relevant disciplinary areas within the field of Late Antique and Byzantine Studies;
- to deliver a course which is informed by the research expertise of staff, which is suited to your need, which provides opportunities for you to develop academically, and which prepares you for further study;
- to develop knowledge and understanding of Late Antique and Byzantine Studies and of the research associated with it, and to prepare you to undertake their own research under appropriate levels of supervision;
- to support the development of a range of transferable skills suitable both for further academic study and for a range of future careers.

Section 6 – Course learning outcomes

In general terms, the courses provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. (Categories – Knowledge and understanding (K), Skills and other attributes (S), and Transferable skills (*))

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a detailed knowledge and understanding of the methodologies of Late Antique and Byzantine Studies (K); 2. an understanding of critical methodologies and their limitations (K); 3. an understanding of advanced, current research issues relevant to the discipline (K); 4. a critical awareness of the multiplicity of material available and the strengths and weaknesses of the various forms of historical information (K); 5. a general appreciation of the varied and interlinked methodologies for understanding antiquity and the medieval age (K); 6. the reading and understanding of ancient and medieval texts, both in print and in manuscript (K); 7. a grasp of literary criticism necessary for understanding and appreciating the style of ancient and medieval authors (K); 8. a critical awareness of the main forms of material available to those studying Classical antiquity and the Byzantine world (K). 9. an ability to understand and appreciate the limits of current understanding and knowledge of antiquity and the medieval world (S); 10. an advanced ability to consider and critically assess secondary literature (S);(*) 11. an ability to synthesise complex information from a range of sources and to recognise the differences and similarities between documentary and literary evidence where both exist (S);(*) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. an ability to consider, analyse and present research issues within a discussion format (S);(*) 13. an ability to discuss research methodology with rigour and clarity (S);(*) 14. an ability to pursue an extended piece of independent research to an appropriate level with appropriate supervision and guidance (S);(*) 15. an ability to present research in a manner appropriate to the Byzantine Studies research discipline (S); 16. skills necessary to pursue further research, whether academic or professional (S);(*) 17. a basic competence in reading and studying Greek manuscripts (S); 18. a range of skills and knowledge of methodologies drawn from a variety of sub-areas of Classical Studies (S); 19. a range of skills and knowledge of methodologies deployed in the study of Byzantine history and literature (S); 20. interpretative and analytical skills in dealing with a variety of primary and secondary source material including literary and/or philosophical, archaeological, documentary and legal (S); 21. an ability to attain an understanding of ancient cultural and social forms from a range of different source materials (S); 22. skills necessary for the written and oral presentation of argument and debate;* 23. the discipline to meet deadlines (S);(*) 24. research skills and the capacity of independent thought and study (S).(*)
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Section 7 - Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning is mostly by means of lectures, seminar discussions, oral presentations, site, library and museum visits, group work, problem solving study groups, practical project work, guided independent research and guided independent study. The basic strategies are to nurture the interest and enthusiasm of the students for the field, to develop the students' critical and communication skills, and to develop critical thought, and research cognitive, intellectual and general skills. Assessment of knowledge and understanding is typically by coursework essays, groupwork, oral presentations, reports and exercises and an independent dissertation. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the Department of [Classics](#) 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, however, the assessments listed above are all 'summative', which means you will receive a mark for it 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. 'Coursework' might typically include a written assignment, like an essay. Coursework might also include a report, dissertation or portfolio. 'Practical assessments' might include an oral assessment or presentation, or a demonstration of practical skills required for the particular module

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, such as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

Section 8 – Additional costs

You should be aware that the core language and many optional modules are taught at Bedford Square in London and other London Colleges (King's College London, UCL and Birkbeck), and therefore you will need to travel two or more times a week to central London to attend these classes. A maximum annual sum of £130 will be reimbursed to you towards your travelling expenses (Southwest Trains Travelcard) for this purpose by the Department if you are a student residing in Egham.

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	7
<p>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.</p>	
QAA Characteristics Statement (Master's Degrees) – September 2015	https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/supporting-resources
<p>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.</p>	

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
PG Diploma	Passes in at least 120 credits, with fails of between 40% to 49% for up to 40 credits condonable (with the exception of any course specific requirements)	Royal Holloway, University of London
PG Certificate	Passes in at least 60 credits with no condonable fails	Royal Holloway, University of London