

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 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](#).

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	May 2024	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	2026/27
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	30	7	MC
Different codes depending on choice and level of language learning	Greek or Latin Language (Beginners, Intermediate or Advanced level)	30	7	MC
<p>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'.</p> <p>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.</p>				
3.2 Optional modules				
<p>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.</p>				
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 [Academic Taught Regulations](#) 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 (*)*)

Theme	Course learning outcome
K, S	Students will be able to demonstrate an advanced critical understanding of key concepts, theories, research, and debates that currently inform the discipline and study of Late Antique and Byzantine Studies. They will acquire the ability to synthesise complex information from a range of sources, recognising the differences and similarities between documentary and literary evidence where both exist.
K	Students will acquire a detailed knowledge and understanding of the varied and interlinked methodologies of Late Antique and Byzantine Studies, including critical methodologies and their limitations. They will acquire an appreciation of these methodologies for understanding antiquity and the medieval age.
S, *	Students will develop competency in skills as appropriate to Late Antique and Byzantine Studies (e.g., language, digital literacy, bibliographic discovery) to advance their knowledge of the period/themes under study, and prepare them for future research, whether academic or professional. They will acquire the ability to read and understand ancient and medieval texts, both in print and in manuscript.
S, *	Students will be able to practise self-generated and authentic design by creating topics for discussion-based and/or research projects that speak to, and advance, their academic interests and interpretations of the field/period under study.
K, S, *	Students will acquire an advanced appreciation of the diversity of historical experiences and languages, records, and sources relating to Late Antique and Byzantine Studies, together with an understanding of why partial and incomplete historical narratives occurred in the past and persist today.
S, *	Students will engage critically with a range of sources (secondary; primary) and by genre (material, visual, textual, oral, digital, etc.), addressing questions regarding the diversity of genre (context and content, perspective, and purpose) that currently inform Late Antique and Byzantine Studies.
S, *	Students will be able to structure and communicate their ideas, in writing or by other formats (e.g., digital, oral, creative, verbal, as appropriate to the discipline of Late Antique and Byzantine Studies), producing coherent outcomes, which are supported with relevant evidence and speak to specialist and/or non-specialist audiences (depending on the assignment types and word lengths involved).
S, *	Students will be able to exhibit competency in designing creative work and/or research assignments that integrate insights from prior feedback, whether this feedback is gained through peer-to-peer learning opportunities or written assessments.
S, *	Students will be able to demonstrate self-direction and time management in tackling and solving set tasks; they will be able to act independently when it comes to planning and carrying out their assignments, including designing and completing an extended piece of original independent research (Dissertation).
S, *	Students will practise collaboration, curiosity, and peer learning. They will be able to implement effective methods for pursuing structured critical enquiry, including the ability to retrieve, select and synthesise relevant information from a range of sources, by following guidance and by exercising initiative, personal responsibility, and academic integrity.
K, S, *	Students will be encouraged to be mindful of others, acting with inclusion, empathy, tolerance and freedom. They will acquire transferable historical knowledge and practical skills that are multi-vocational, agile, and responsive to contemporary social and global challenges.

K, S, *	Students will be able to appreciate the ongoing significance of the Late Antique and Byzantine period to contemporary social and political life, and, as relevant, use acquired knowledge and skills in clarifying the historical record where it arises for different groups (e.g., educators, heritage providers, and marginalised and minority groups, as appropriate to the field of Late Antique and Byzantine Studies).
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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. 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 [Royal Holloway Curriculum 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

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 the Capital to attend these classes. Egham based students will be reimbursed a flat rate of £10 per class in central London towards these travel expenses for this purpose by the Department.

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
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 Characteristics Statement (Master’s Degrees) – September 2015	https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/supporting-resources
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
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