

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes **Honours Degree programmes in Hispanic Studies**. For Combined and Joint Honours Degree programmes, please also refer to the equivalent document(s) for the other subject(s). This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2009**.

The aims of all Honours Degree programmes in Hispanic Studies are:

- to provide students with knowledge of the Spanish language, and of Spanish and Latin American literature, history and culture, to enable them to engage with a European community in which Spain has an important role and also with Spanish-speaking communities across the world;
- to encourage an outlook which understands, respects and recognises the differences between cultures and lifestyles both in Europe and in the rest of the world;
- to stimulate students to read widely in Spanish, and to encourage them to develop and express their opinions cogently whether orally or in writing;
- to encourage students to situate elements of Hispanic culture in their socio-historical context by relating them to a wider cultural spectrum encompassing art, literature, history, politics, and a range of other social, religious and philosophical influences;
- to equip students with a range of transferable skills which they will find useful during their university careers and in subsequent professional life, and to equip them to make valuable links between their university studies and events outside the university;
- to encourage students to continue their education, and where appropriate, to prepare them for higher degrees in Hispanic Studies and related fields.

Most programmes are delivered in four stages; stages one, two and four each comprise one year of full-time study during which the student must follow courses to the value of four units (one unit is equivalent to 30 national credits). Stage three consists of a year spent partly or wholly in Spain or Latin America, at a university or in approved employment. The Period of Residence Abroad (PRA) abroad is assessed via full or half units to the value of two full units based either on marks awarded for courses taken at the foreign university or on a report on the work placement, written in Spanish plus a full or half-unit oral examination to test linguistic skills and intercultural awareness. Combined programmes with Hispanic Studies as a minor component consist of three stages comprising four units each, without a year abroad. The curriculum is based around a core of mandatory units in Spanish language, together with a range of optional cultural courses, some of which are taught by the Department of History. In line with College policy, one half or one whole unit can have elective status and may be freely chosen from courses offered by other departments.

Specifically, in stage one, courses offered to students place particular emphasis on establishing a basic level of knowledge and sound study skills. In stage two, these foundations are built upon by increasing the level of complexity of the subject matter; consideration is also given to preparation for the Period of Residence Abroad. The PRA must not be less than nine months. Students who fail to meet these minimum requirements may be required to repeat the year abroad before being allowed to progress to the final year.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning

opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff. In general terms, the programmes provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

- to understand both spoken and written modern Spanish across a range of registers and in a variety of contexts;
- to speak Spanish with a high level of fluency and accuracy;
- to write articulately and convincingly in Spanish across a range of registers in varied contexts;
- to understand and apply different theoretical and critical approaches to various aspects of Hispanic culture;†
- to place cultural forms in their socio-historical and critical context both in Hispanic cultures and, more broadly, in a European or global context; †
- to maximize the benefits offered by the period of residence abroad by means of: †
 - enhancing understanding of the subject area;
 - acquiring new perspectives on the subject area within the framework of the other country's educational or professional culture;
 - understanding intercultural issues in relation to aspects of self (attitudes, behaviour and cultural expectations) on adaptation to life in a foreign culture.

Skills and other attributes

- to use language (both English and Spanish) creatively and precisely for a range of purposes and audiences;
- to take notes effectively, organize materials, and ultimately, produce well-structured, well-argued essays by a deadline;*
- to work autonomously in the planning and execution of individual essays, projects and research;*†
- to exercise critical judgement in the light of evidence and argument;* †
- to collect, analyse, synthesise and evaluate information;*
- to conduct library and bibliographical research;*
- to employ appropriate IT skills (including word-processing, email, use of the internet and databases).*
- to maximize the benefits offered by the period of residence abroad by means of making major improvements in competence in the target language.

* transferable skills

† outcome not applicable to Combined Minor Hispanic Studies

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Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching is carried out mainly by means of lectures, structured seminars and language classes. Language acquisition is also promoted through Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) packages, Moodle (the College's Virtual Learning Environment platform) and other web-based resources, appropriate audio and video material, translation work, and textual analysis using printed and electronically available materials. Most language classes are conducted in Spanish (frequently by native speakers) to encourage familiarity with the language in the classroom. The four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking are integrated with the study of key grammatical structures. A wide range of sources is used to encourage familiarity with different linguistic registers and the acquisition of new vocabulary. Classes for cultural courses are conducted mainly in English, partly because of the sophistication required at university level in students' critical responses to cultural works and in essay-writing and partly in order to inculcate excellent oral and written communication skills in English in addition to those simultaneously developed by students in their other European language/s.

Learning is encouraged through strong support at every stage for active student participation in lectures and seminars, and through designated reading and directed self-study. Essays and other, shorter written pieces ensure that the skills of exposition and critique are developed and evaluated throughout the learning process. School programmes are so designed that the foundations of the intellectual and transferable skills are laid in stage one and then developed, with an increasing reliance on the individual student's personal research and self-direction. The Period of Residence Abroad (PRA) makes a particularly important contribution to this growing intellectual independence. Joint Honours students taking a second language, will often divide their year between a Spanish-speaking country and the other country. All students are encouraged to acquire IT competence, in particular by registering for the IT skills programmes which become available from time to time through the [Computer Centre](#).

Assessment of knowledge, understanding and linguistic skills is by a combination of coursework and two essays, and, in some cases, a written examination (for cultural courses) and by a mixture of continuous assessment (including class presentations, grammar exercises and reading comprehension) and a final examination (both written and oral) for language courses. Course units studied at a Spanish or Latin American university during the Period of Residence Abroad are also examined in Spain or Latin America, whilst students who undertake a work placement are required to submit a work placement project report which will be assessed at Royal Holloway. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be found in the Detailed Course Specifications available on the School's [website](#).

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Details of the programme structure(s)

Please note that the list of available optional courses offered is subject to change and not all courses run each year. A full list of courses for the current academic year is provided with course preregistration documentation e-mailed to all students before they start their second and final years, and for Incoming first-year students via the course preregistration link on the School's [web pages](#).

Single Honours Degree programmes

Stage one:

Students with GCSE Spanish or no prior knowledge of the language must take:

SN1010 Intensive Spanish I (1 unit)

AND

SN1100 Spanish through texts (½ unit)

Students with A Level or A/S Level Spanish must take:

SN1001 Spanish I (1 unit)

OR

SN2001 Spanish II (1 unit) (for students deemed by the School to be proficient speakers on entry)

and choose options equal to the value of 2½ full units (students taking SN1100 – see above) or 3 full units from a range of Stage one courses offered by the School for students on this programme. Some courses may only be available to students with the equivalent of A-level Spanish.

Stage two:

Students must take either:

SN2010 Intensive Spanish II (1 unit) (for students who have taken and passed SN1010 in their first year)

OR

SN2001 Spanish II (1 unit) (for students who have taken and passed SN1001 in their first year)

OR

SN2011 Principles & Practice of Translation Spanish to English (½ unit) AND SN2012 Principles & Practice of Translation English to Spanish (½ unit) (for students who have taken and passed SN2001 in their first year)

and choose options equal to the value of 3 full units from a range of Stage two courses offered by the School for students on this programme.

Stage three:

Students must take:

SN2501 Oral Examination in Spanish (1 unit)

and one of:

SN2401 Study Abroad (1 unit)

SN2201 Work Placement Project (1 unit)

Stage four:

Students must take:

SN3001 Spanish III (1 unit)

and choose options equal to the value of 3 full units from a range of Stage four courses (including dissertations) offered by the School for students on this programme. There may be some restrictions on choices.

At all stages of the degree programme, where less than the full load of options is chosen, the remaining half or one full course unit has elective status and can be freely chosen from those offered by other departments in accordance with College Regulations.

Combined Honours Degree programmes with Hispanic Studies as the major component

Stage one:

Students with GCSE Spanish only or no prior knowledge of the language must take:

SN1010 Intensive Spanish I (1 unit)

AND

SN1100 Spanish through texts (½ unit)

Students with A Level or A/S Level Spanish must take:

SN1001 Spanish I (1 unit)

OR

SN2001 Spanish II (1 unit) (for students deemed by the School to be proficient speakers on entry)

and choose options equal to the value of 1½ units (students taking SN1100) or 2 full units (all other students) from a range of Stage one courses offered by the School for students on this programme (some courses may only be available to students with the equivalent of A-level Spanish)

and specified courses in the minor subject.

Stage two:

Students must take either:

SN2010 Intensive Spanish II (1 unit) (for students who have taken and passed SN1010 in their first year)

OR

SN2001 Spanish II (1 unit) (for students who have taken and passed SN1001 in their first year)

OR

SN2011 Principles & Practice of Translation Spanish to English (½ unit) AND SN2012 Principles & Practice of Translation English to Spanish (½ unit) (for students who have taken and passed SN2001 in their first year)

and choose options equal to the value of 2 full units from a list of Stage two courses offered by the School for students on this programme

and specified courses in the minor subject.

Stage three:

Students must take:

SN2501 Oral Examination in Spanish (1 unit)

and one of:

SN2401 Study Abroad (1 unit)

SN2201 Work Placement Project (1 unit)

Stage four:

Students must take:

SN3001 Spanish III (1 unit)

and choose options equal to the value of 2 full units from a range of Stage four courses (including dissertations) offered by the School for students on this programme (including some History courses subject to certain restrictions).

and specified courses in the minor subject.

Joint Honours Degree programmes with Hispanic Studies as an equal component

Stage one:

Students with GCSE Spanish only or no prior knowledge of the language must take:

SN1010 Intensive Spanish I (1 unit)

AND

SN1100 Spanish through texts (½ unit)*

Students with A Level or A/S Level Spanish must take

SN1001 Spanish I (1 unit)

OR

SN2001 Spanish II (1 unit) (for students deemed by the School to be proficient speakers on entry)

*Does not apply to European Studies students, for whom this course is recommended but not compulsory.

and choose options equal to the value of one half unit (students taking SN1100) or 1 full unit (all other students) from a range of Stage one courses offered by the School for students on this programme. (some courses may be restricted to students with the equivalent of A-level Spanish).

and specified courses in the other subject.

Stage two:

Students must take either:

SN2010 Intensive Spanish II (1 unit) (for students who have taken and passed SN1010 in their first year)

OR

SN2001 Spanish II (1 unit) (for students who have taken and passed SN1001 in their first year)

OR

SN2011 Principles & Practice of Translation Spanish to English (½ unit) AND SN2012 Principles & Practice of Translation English to Spanish (½ unit) (for students who have taken and passed SN2001 in their first year)

and choose options equal to the value of 1 full unit from a range of Stage two courses offered by the School for students on this programme.

and specified courses in the other subject.

Stage three:

Where Spanish is combined with a non-language subject, students must take:

SN2501 Oral Examination in Spanish (1 unit)

and one of:

SN2401 Study Abroad (1 unit)

SN2201 Work Placement Project (1 unit)

Where Spanish is combined with another modern language, the assessment will be split if the period of residence abroad was divided between the two language areas and students must instead take:

SN2502 Oral Examination in Spanish (½ unit)

and one of:

SN2402 Study Abroad (½ unit)

SN2202 Work Placement Project (½ unit)

Stage four:

Students must take:

SN3001 Spanish III (1 unit)

and choose options equal to the value of 1 full unit from a range of Stage four courses offered by the School for students on this programme (including some History courses subject to certain restrictions)

and specified courses in the other subject.

Combined Honours Degree programmes with Hispanic Studies as a minor component

Stage one:

Students must take either:

SN1001 Spanish I (1 unit) (for students with A or AS level (or equivalent) Spanish)

OR

SN2001 Spanish II (1 unit) (for students deemed by the School to be proficient speakers on entry)

and specified courses in the major subject.

Stage two:

Students must take either:

SN2001 Spanish II (1 unit) (for students who have taken and passed SN1001 in their first year)

OR

SN2011 Principles & Practice of Translation Spanish to English (½ unit) AND SN2012 Principles & Practice of Translation English to Spanish (½ unit) (for students who have taken and passed SN2001 in their first year)

and specified courses in the major subject.

Stage three:

Only applicable if the major subject is another foreign language. Assessment in this case will be in the major language.

Stage three (four):

Students must take:

SN3001 Spanish III (1 unit)

and specified courses in the major subject.

Additional notes on the Year Abroad:

There are three main schemes:

- Spanish or Latin American University: students spend all or part of the academic year following courses of their choice at the host university. In Spain, Most students choose a host university which has a Socrates link with RHUL. These currently include Alcalá de Henales, Almería, Autónoma de Madrid, Cádiz, Complutense de Madrid, Córdoba, Gran Canaria, Granada, León, Málaga, Murcia, Salamanca, Sevilla Pablo Olavide, Sevilla Universidad, Valencia, Valladolid, and Zaragoza. Our Latin American university destinations, none of which have Socrates links, include Mexico, Cuba, Chile, Argentina and Uruguay. Students following Joint Honours, Multilingual Studies and European Studies programmes may choose to spend the year in two countries.
- Assistant post (co-ordinated by the British Council): students are employed to teach English in a school in Spain or Latin America, normally for up to 12 hours per week. Students are required to produce a written Work Placement Report in Spanish for assessment at RHUL.
- Other work placement: although the School does not undertake to find work placements abroad for students, students themselves, or their families, are sometimes able to make such arrangements, which must be approved by the School. Students in such approved work have similar academic work commitments to those in assistant posts.

The study requirements associated with the year abroad are as follows:

The School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures at Royal Holloway, University of London has a system for assessment of the Year Abroad to reflect its integral place within the degree programme which involves two course units:

The **13th unit** aims to develop intellectual or professional abilities through an experience either working, or studying, in a Spanish-speaking country.

The **14th unit** aims to further linguistic abilities and cultural awareness through a period of up to one academic year spent living in a Spanish-speaking country.

Assessment of the 13th unit

As from 2010-11, students are to follow and provide marks for classes, in subjects approved by the School at Royal Holloway, amounting to a minimum of 48 European credits for a full year, and a minimum of 24 European credits for a half year placement. Certain courses in Spanish language may count towards these credits. For full details of the conditions applying in respect of such courses see page 10 of the 2010-11 [PRA Handbook](#).

Students on a work placement, including assistants, will be assessed by a Work Placement Report. This report will be written in Spanish and will discuss aspects of the year abroad relating specifically to the work environment. Students may also be required to write a Cultural Report, in addition to the Work Placement Report. Those spending an entire year in a Spanish speaking country on a work place must write a Work Placement Report, and a Cultural Report. Those on half a year work placement can choose between a Work Placement and a Cultural Report.

The **14th unit** is assessed by examination to test oral/aural linguistic skills and intercultural awareness.

Further details can be found in the Period of Residence Abroad [Handbooks](#) for 2009-10 and 2010-11.

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Progression and award requirements

The progression and award requirements are essentially the same across all Honours Degree programmes at Royal Holloway. Students must pass units to the value of at least three units on each stage of the programme. In the case of Hispanic Studies, the compulsory first year language units must be passed (SN1001, SN1010 or SN2001 – see Programme Structure above) in order to progress into the second year of study and SN2001, SN2010 or SN2011 and SN2012 – see Programme Structure above) must be passed in order to progress onto the Year Aboard or final year of study, depending on the degree programme. In order to qualify for an award in the field of study, the final-year language unit SN3001 must be passed in the final year of study. Students are considered for the award and classified on the basis of a weighted average. This is calculated from marks gained in courses taken in stages two, three, and four, and gives twice the weighting to marks gained in stage four. The two units taken during stage three are included in the average mark for stage two. In order to qualify for the award, students must gain a weighted average of at least 35%.

With effect from September 2010, **all first year students** taking courses in the School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures are required to attend the course 'Academic Skills for Students of Modern Languages' and 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 Merit 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 [College's Undergraduate Regulations](#) (Section: *Conditions for progression to the next stage*) but fail to pass the Moodle-based quiz will not be permitted to progress into their second year of academic study at the College.

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Student support and guidance

- **Personal Advisors:** Each student is allocated to a particular member of academic teaching staff. Personal Advisors are available to meet their advisees regularly throughout the programme in order to advise on academic, pastoral or welfare issues and to review academic performance. Personal Advisors may also advise students on College and University support services, including the Student Counselling Service, the Health Centre and the Educational Support Office for students with special needs. When a student's usual Personal Advisor has sabbatical leave, the student is re-allocated to another colleague.
- **Office Hours:** All members of staff make themselves available for consultation by students on any academic or pastoral matter at specific hours during each teaching week of the academic year.

- **Academic Co-ordinators:** The Academic Co-ordinator provides a further, back-up source of academic advice. The Academic co-ordinator is also responsible for general oversight of Joint Honours students, liaising as necessary with Personal Advisors and with the other departments on the programme. Matters concerning programme pathways, course options and timetabling are discussed in the first instance with the student's Personal Advisor who may refer these to the Academic Co-ordinator.
- **Language Co-ordinator:** Each language has its own Language Co-ordinator, who may be consulted by students about any matters related to language courses and to the School's audio-visual and CALL resources related to these courses.
- **Period of Residence Abroad (PRA) Co-ordinators:** The PRA Co-ordinators, members of academic staff, run briefing sessions for students in Stage 2 of the programme who are going abroad the following year. The PRA Co-ordinators provide help and advice with applications, forms, accommodation plans, interviews, the British Council, and the Socrates-Erasmus Programme.
- **School Educational Support Office (ESO) Network Member:** The ESO Network Member co-ordinates the provisions made within the School for students with disabilities or special educational needs through liaison with colleagues across the School and elsewhere in College (above all the ESO itself).
- **Student Handbooks:** The *School of Modern Languages Student Handbook* is published online annually and made available to all Modern Languages students via the 'For Students' section of the SMLLC website. It comprises a complete general guide to the School, its various subject areas, and its resources, containing contact details, help available, facilities, advice on study skills, assessment, feedback, plagiarism, Student-Staff Committee, examinations, etc., and information about other sources of support offered by the College. Lists of courses available, with course descriptions, are also available on the SMLLC website.
- **Student-Staff Committee:** All years of the undergraduate programme as well as postgraduate students and teaching staff are represented on this committee, which is chaired by a student. Any student may bring matters of concern before this committee, which, after discussion, will refer them to the appropriate School or College authority for resolution.
- **Careers Advice:** Whilst the principal role is played by the University of London Careers Service, there is also a School Careers Liaison Officer who works with the Careers Service to ensure timely dissemination to students of information concerning careers, employers' forums, or other careers events. A number of these, including sessions designed to raise students' awareness of the marketability of the transferable skills acquired during their university careers, are organized on an annual basis specifically for Modern Languages students.
- **Resources:** The School is situated in the International Building where, along with Royal Holloway International, it offers students access to computer laboratories with dedicated Computer-Assisted Language Learning Software and recording facilities. The School liaises closely with the College libraries to ensure that the needs of students are appropriately met by the College's extensive collections of books, journals and electronic resources. Foreign-language videos and DVDs can be viewed in the library's viewing rooms.

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Admission requirements

The Department's standard conditional offer is available on the [Course Catalogue](#) web page. However, the Department also has considerable flexibility in its admissions and offers policy and strongly encourages applications from non-standard applicants. Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. It may also be helpful to contact the [Admissions Office](#) for specific guidance on the entrance requirements for particular programmes.

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Further learning and career opportunities

Graduates from Hispanic Studies degree programmes have successfully progressed into a wide range of professions, while some have continued to Postgraduate studies. For further details please refer to the [Careers Service](#).

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Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The new scoring system for the RAE 2008 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour. 60% of the College's research profile is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent outperforming the national average of 50%. The College is ranked 16th in the UK for research of 4* standard and 18th for 3* and 4* research. The 2008 RAE rated Hispanic Studies at Royal Holloway best department in the country for the quality of its 4* 'world-leading' research.

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List of programmes

All the programmes are taught entirely by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and lead to awards of the University of London. Programmes in Hispanic Studies are not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The QAA subject benchmark statement in Hispanic Studies describes the general features which one might expect from Honours Degree programmes in the subject, and can therefore be used as a point of reference when reading this document (see www.qaa.ac.uk). UCAS codes are given in parentheses (see www.ucas.ac.uk).

Single Honours Degree programmes in Hispanic Studies

BA Spanish (R400)

Combined Honours Degree programmes with Hispanic Studies as a major component

BA Spanish with Film Studies (R4P3)
BA Spanish with French (R4R1)
BA Spanish with German (R4R2)
BA Spanish with History (R4V1)
BA Spanish with International Relations (R4L2)
BA Spanish with Italian (R4R3)
BA Spanish with Music (R4W3)
BA Spanish with Philosophy (R4V5)

Combined Honours Degree programmes with Hispanic Studies as a minor component

BA French with Spanish (R1R4)
BA German with Spanish (R2R4)
BA Italian with Spanish (R3R4)
BA Music with Spanish (W3R4)
BSc Mathematics with Spanish (G1R4)
BSc (Econ) Economics with Spanish (L1R4)
BA European Literature & Cultural Studies (R990)

Joint Honours Degree programmes with Hispanic Studies as an equal component

BA English and Spanish (QR34)
BA European Studies (Spanish) (R401)
BA French and Spanish (RR14)
BA German and Spanish (RR24)
BA History and Spanish (VR14)
BA Italian and Spanish (RR34)
BA Management and Spanish (NR24)
BA Multilingual Studies (R991)
BA Spanish and European Literature & Cultural Studies (QR94)
BA Comparative Literature and Culture and Hispanic Studies (QR24)
BA Spanish and Philosophy (RV45)

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