RV92: Modern European Languages and History with Year Abroad

Undergraduate BA 2020

**Essentials**

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<tr>
<th>UCAS code</th>
<th>RV92</th>
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<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>BA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mode of study</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>4 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Durham City (<a href="http://www.durham.ac.uk/study/location/durham.city">www.durham.ac.uk/study/location/durham.city</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-Level</td>
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<tr>
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- International qualifications ([www.dur.ac.uk/international/country.information/](http://www.dur.ac.uk/international/country.information/)) |
| Contextual Offers | You may be eligible for an offer which is one or two grades lower than our standard entry requirements. Find out more ([www.durham.ac.uk/study/ug/apply/contextualoffers/](http://www.durham.ac.uk/study/ug/apply/contextualoffers/)). |
| More information | Still have questions? ([www.durham.ac.uk/study/askus/](http://www.durham.ac.uk/study/askus/)) |
| Department(s) Website | www.durham.ac.uk/history  
www.durham.ac.uk/mlac |
Course Summary

Description

This four-year Joint Honours degree allows you to further your interest in the study of a modern European language and related cultural topics alongside exploring different periods and themes of history.

Year 1

You will take a compulsory language module. This is a single module for all languages studied post-A Level and a double module for beginners’ languages. These compulsory modules focus on the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. In addition, you choose either one or two from a wide range of modules dealing with various aspects of the literature, film, art, history and politics of the culture you are studying. These cultural modules aim to develop your independent research and analytical skills as well as introducing you to the culture in question.

All first-year modules are intended to function as introductions to and more general overviews of areas of study in which it is possible to specialise later in the degree.

In the first year, you will take up to three modules in History. These may be chosen from the wide range of first-year modules available, but you must choose at least one module in Medieval/Early Modern History and at least one module in Modern History. There are no compulsory History modules on the Joint Honours degree.

The History modules on offer change each year, as they reflect the research interests of staff; therefore we cannot guarantee in advance that a particular module will be running. Some of the modules running in recent years have included:

- Tensions of Empire: British Imperialism 1763-1963
- Reformation Europe, 1500-1650
- New Heaven, New Earth: Latin Christendom and the World, 1000-1300
- The Birth of Western Society, 300-1050 AD

Year 2

You will continue to take a compulsory language module, in which you will continue to develop the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. In addition, you will choose one, two or three from a wide range of modules on the literature, film art, history and politics of the culture you are studying. All second-year modules build on skills and knowledge acquired in the first year and allow you to specialise more in areas which interest you (from medieval literature to contemporary film).

In the second year, you will take up to four modules in History, choosing from those available in year two. Second-year History modules tend to focus more on particular periods and events, and there are fewer survey courses. One of the History modules you take may be ‘Conversations with History’. This is a seminar-driven, student-led module, which encourages you to think about the way in which history is written. Students choose one from a range of possible strands in this module, each of which focuses on a particular historical debate or phenomenon. You must choose one History module which is either Medieval or Early Modern; and one which is
Modern (the Conversations strand will count as one of these choices). There is no other restriction on choice.

There are no compulsory History modules for students on the Joint Honours degree.

**Conversations strands:**

- The Usable Past
- The Built Environment
- History and Guilt
- Power and Peoples
- Inventing the Middle Ages
- Monarchy
- Empire, Liberty and Governance.

**Other modules in previous years have included:**

- Hard Times: British Society c. 1800-1901
- Modern China’s Transformations
- The American Half-century: the United States Since 1945
- The King’s Two Bodies: Rulership in Late Medieval Europe
- The Ottoman World, 1400-1700.

**Year 3**

The third year is spent abroad as an English assistant in a school, as a student in a university or in employment of some kind. During the year abroad you complete a Target Language Research Project related to the country you visit supervised by a designated Year Abroad project supervisor.

Students do not take any assessed modules in History during the third year.

**Year 4**

You will continue to take a single core language module, developing your skills to an advanced level. You will also choose from a wide range of specialist modules on literature, film, art, history and politics in the language you are studying, and you may be able to take a specialist language modules such as translation or interpreting.

These modules are designed around staff research expertise. All fourth-year modules build on skills and knowledge acquired earlier in the degree and allow you to specialise still further in areas which interest you (such as the work of a particular writer or the culture of a particular period).

You will usually take the equivalent of up to three modules in History, though it may be possible to take the equivalent of up to four by varying the number of Modern Languages and Cultures (MLAC) modules chosen. You may choose a triple-module Special Subject, taught entirely through seminars, which involves close study of primary sources. This involves working in a small group with a specialist in the field – with a three-hour seminar every week. You may instead choose to do supervised independent research leading to the writing of an extended dissertation.
Depending on your other choices, you may be able to take one other single module in the third year: third-year History single modules are all strongly reflexive in character, encouraging you to think about the ways in which historical knowledge is produced.

You will choose your own dissertation topic, through consultation with a supervisor. There are some limits, set by the availability of primary material and the expertise of supervisors, but the potential range of topics is very wide indeed. You will research and write a dissertation either on a historical topic (supervised by the History Department) or on an aspect of culture or cultural production (supervised by MLAC). As with modules at other levels, the precise choice of Special Subject and third-year single modules changes from year to year. Some of the History modules that have run in recent years are:

**Special Subjects:**
- A World Turned Upside Down: Radicalism in the English Revolution
- The Disappearance of Claudine Rouge: Murder, Mystery and Microhistory in Early Modern France
- Light Beyond the Limes: the Christianisation of Pagan Europe, 300-1000
- From War to Cold War: US Foreign Policy, c. 1944-1948.

**Single modules:**
- Anglo-Saxon Invasion? The Search for English Origins
- Revolution and History
- Interpreting Conflict in Post-Colonial Africa
- History of American Capitalism.

We review course structures and core content (in light of e.g. external and student feedback) every year, and will publish finalised core requirements for 2019 entry from September 2018.

**Study Abroad**

**History**

The Department participates in the University-wide overseas exchanges with:

- Boston College (USA),
- the University of British Columbia (Canada),
- the University of Hong Kong (China)
- the National University of Singapore (Singapore).

If you study on the four-year Joint Honours in Modern European Languages and History degree, you will spend your third year abroad at a European university or a work placement as part of the University’s ERASMUS exchanges.

**School of Modern Languages and Cultures**

We attach great importance to your time abroad, during the third year of your degree, which you may spend as an English assistant in a school, as a student in a foreign university, or in employment with an overseas organisation. This is a time of enormous linguistic and personal development from which you should gain a high level of fluency in your language(s) and enjoy a unique opportunity to make new friends, appreciate new cultures and learn to work and study in new ways. Employers at home and abroad are impressed by the lasting
benefits, especially in increased linguistic confidence, intercultural agility and general self-motivation. During the year abroad you will complete an academic assignment related to each of the countries in which you stay. You will need to pass these in order to fulfil the requirements of the BA in Modern European Languages and History (with Year Abroad).

Placement Year

You may be able to take a work placement. Find out more (www.durham.ac.uk/placements/).
Admissions Process

Subject requirements, level and grade

A level offer – AAA including at least one language from French, German, Italian, Russian or Spanish and History.

BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma/OCR Cambridge Technical Extended Diploma – DDD including A level requirements as above.

IB Diploma score – 37 with 666 in higher level subjects. Please see above for required languages.

In addition to satisfying the University’s general entry requirements, please note:

- We welcome applications from those with other qualifications equivalent to our standard entry requirements and from mature students with non-standard qualifications or who may have had a break in their study. Please contact our Admissions Selectors.
- Grade A in French or German at A Level, or equivalent, is required to study French or German.
- Grade A in Russian, Spanish or Italian at A Level, or equivalent, is required to study that subject at advanced level.
- Ancient History is acceptable as one of three A Levels but History A Level must also be taken.
- Key skills qualifications are welcomed, but are not taken into account as part of the entry requirements.
- We welcome enquiries regarding applications for deferred entry which may be considered in special circumstances. Please contact us using www.durham.ac.uk/study/askus/

Science A levels

Applicants taking Science A levels that include a practical component will be required to take and pass this as a condition of entry. This applies only to applicants sitting A levels with an English examination board.

English Language requirements

Please check requirements for your subject and level of study (www.durham.ac.uk/learningandteaching.handbook/1/3/3/).

How to apply

www.durham.ac.uk/undergraduate/apply

Information relevant to your country

www.durham.ac.uk/international/country.information/
Fees and Funding

Full Time Fees

<table>
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<tr>
<th>EU Student</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Island Student</td>
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<tr>
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The tuition fees shown for home and EU students are for one complete academic year of full time study and are set according to the academic year of entry. Fees for subsequent years of your course may rise in line with an inflationary uplift as determined by the government.

The tuition fees shown for overseas students are for one complete academic year of full time study, are set according to the academic year of entry, and remain the same throughout the duration of the programme for that cohort (unless otherwise stated).

Please also check costs for colleges and accommodation (www.durham.ac.uk/undergraduate/accommodation/costs/).

Scholarships and funding

www.durham.ac.uk/undergraduate/finance
Career Opportunities

History

We offer our students exceptional opportunities that will help you become critically and socially engaged graduates of the highest calibre.

As a department we help you reflect academically on your progress as you develop into a mature historian, and develop the many advanced skills you will acquire alongside your degree. These skills can be harnessed for your career, allowing you to articulate your degree-specific skills in an outward-facing manner.

This strategy is at the very centre of our planning, which we have woven into our learning, teaching and
planning. It is no surprise, therefore, to find that our graduates have gone on to find successful careers in a wide variety of fields, from the civil service, law, banking and business, to teaching, media, journalism, the military and further study.

References

When applying for roles many employers will ask you to supply academic references from one of your tutors. We always advise that you should approach tutors who know you and your work well, such as a special subject or dissertation tutor.

To help guide you with this process we arrange for advisors from the Careers, Employability and Enterprise Centre (www.dur.ac.uk/careers/) to provide short presentations to each year group as part of joined up sessions with an Academic Careers Contact and the Head of Undergraduate Studies:

- Year 1 covers an introduction to developing employability skills.
- Year 2 focus on internships/work experience.
- Year 3 focus on graduate schemes/recruitment cycle/effective on-line applications

School of Modern Languages and Cultures

A BA in Modern Languages from Durham will provide you with an impressive and unique portfolio of cultural knowledge, transferable skills and placement experiences that is much valued by employers worldwide. The combination of linguistic ability, intellectual rigour and cultural understanding that you acquire during your course makes you eminently employable in a wide range of careers both here and abroad. These include specialist occupations, such as interpreting, translation and teaching, but also industry, business, marketing, finance, the civil service, the European Union agencies, law and the media. In fact, statistics from the Higher Education Statistics Agency reveal that language graduates are on average 10-15% better paid than other arts graduates and have the lowest unemployment rates overall (only outdone by those in medicine and law). With the UK as a whole now producing fewer and fewer linguists, graduates in Modern Languages are increasingly sought after. As one employer put it, ‘the ability to communicate internationally is becoming a pre-requisite for success’.

In particular, the Year Abroad (www.dur.ac.uk/mlac/abroad/), which is and will continue to be an integral part of all our degree programmes, will give you a headstart in the job market. There is significant evidence that the experience of working and studying abroad delivers not just improved language abilities and increased
knowledge but also greatly enhanced intercultural, problem-solving and personal skills. These are a factor in landing first and subsequent jobs for over 70% of language graduates, a significant factor for over 30%, and the determining factor for about 10%. Employers are becoming increasingly aware that language graduates who have spent a year abroad are amongst the most mature, adaptable and independent people entering the job market.

For inspiring examples of where a Durham Modern Languages degree can lead to, read our MLAC Alumni Stories (www.dur.ac.uk/mlac/alumni/alumnistories/).

“ My placement during my year abroad and experience in Peru led to my return to work there after graduation, and promotion to regional manager within 5 months. ”

Of those students that left in 2017:

- 90% are in employment or further study six months after graduating

Of those in employment:

- 89% are in graduate level employment
- Median salary £25,000

(Source: Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey of 2016/17 graduates. The DLHE survey asks leavers from higher education what they are doing six months after graduation. Full definitions for the DLHE Record can be found here: www.hesa.ac.uk/support/definitions/destinations)
Durham University Modern Language graduates enter a wide range of occupational areas including management; publishing; marketing; translation; teaching; business and finance. Our graduates find employment with a wide range of employers both in the public and private sector including the British Council; Barclay's Wealth; Deloitte; Ernst and Young; Goldman Sachs, Grant Thornton; Pharmacia; PwC; Proctor and Gamble; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; the NHS and Teach First. Roles our graduates progress into include copyright and marketing executive; banker; journalist; teacher; trainee tax advisor; research executive; buyer; live subtitler; trainee investment banker; translation checker; writer and translator.

Study and work abroad

MLaC students spend a year abroad after their second year of study. This involves studying and/or working abroad which enriches their cultural awareness and develops the essential employability skills sought by graduate employers.
Open days and visits

Pre-application open day

Pre-application open days are the best way to discover all you need to know about Durham University. With representatives from all relevant academic and support service departments, and opportunities to explore college options, the open days provide our prospective undergraduates with the full experience of Durham University.

Please see the following page for further details and information on how to book a place:
www.durham.ac.uk/opendays

Discover Durham Tours

Discover Durham tours offer a brief introduction to the University. The tour begins at one of our undergraduate colleges, where you will receive an introductory talk from a member of college staff, followed by a tour of the college by current students.

www.durham.ac.uk/undergraduate/live/visit/discoverdurham

Overseas Visit Schedule

www.durham.ac.uk/international/office/meetus
Department Information

History

Overview

We have one of the most highly regarded history departments in the UK and our students love being here. This reputation is the product of the quality and commitment of our staff, and the breadth of our teaching, which reflects the research interests of a Department with an international outlook.

We offer modules covering periods from the Middle Ages to the present and many different parts of the world: Chinese, Japanese, African and US history are all taught at Durham University, alongside British and other European history. Our degree courses reflect the rich variety of modern historical writing, including cultural, media and gender history as well as political, religious, social and economic history. We are proud to attract so many bright and articulate students; our students achieve excellent results, and proceed to successful careers in both the private and public sectors.

Ranking

- World Top 50 in the QS World University Subject Rankings 2019.

Staff

For a current list of staff, please see the History Department web pages (www.dur.ac.uk/history/staff/history_staff/).

Facilities

Located in the historic heart of Durham City, the Department is close to the World Heritage Site of the Cathedral and Castle. We have excellent libraries, containing archives and book collections of international significance and providing access to a huge range of teaching and online resources, which make us a perfect choice for undergraduate study. Teaching takes place in lecture halls in various areas of the University site, and for smaller groups in staff offices and seminar rooms, many fitted with state-of-the-art IT equipment and mostly located in the Department premises at 43 North Bailey.

Website

www.durham.ac.uk/history

School of Modern Languages and Cultures

Overview
In a world of increasing cultural and economic globalisation, the study of modern languages provides many opportunities.

Employers of all kinds are looking for ‘global graduates’: people with excellent communication skills, the ability to mediate sensitively between cultures, and the confidence to adapt to different environments. At Durham University, you can specialise in one or two languages and the cultural worlds associated with them – choose from Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hispanic Studies, Italian, Japanese and Russian.

**Ranking**

- World Top 100 in the *QS World University Subject Rankings 2019*.
- 2nd in *The Complete University Guide 2019*.
- 3rd for all languages we offer in *The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2019*.

**Staff**

For a current list of staff, please see the School of Modern Languages and Cultures web pages (www.dur.ac.uk/mlac/staff/).

**Facilities**

We have 82 teaching staff, including 16 language teaching fellows and 17 native speaker language assistants. The recently refurbished language laboratories have excellent audio-visual facilities and both main lecture rooms and small group teaching rooms are equipped for the increasing integration of film and other audio-visual material. The School’s Open Access Centre is situated in the same building, offering further self-access resources. Durham has first-class library facilities, with the main University collections supplemented by those of college libraries.

**Website**

www.durham.ac.uk/mlac