

Programme specification

BA (Hons) War Studies

Est.
1841

YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

<i>School:</i>	Humanities, Religion and Philosophy
<i>Entry:</i>	2019/20 in: September
<i>Awarding institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Delivery location:</i>	York St John University
<i>Programme/s accredited by:</i>	Not applicable
<i>Exit awards:</i>	BA (Ord) War Studies Certificate of Higher Education War Studies Diploma of Higher Education War Studies
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	L2K3
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	Not applicable
<i>QAA benchmark group(s):</i>	Politics and International Studies
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Full-time for 3 years Part-time for 6 years
<i>Language of study:</i>	English

Introduction and special features

Introduction

Although there were some indications in the 1990s that organised human conflict was declining and the world was increasingly peaceful, there has in fact rarely been a time when the world has been at peace, and the evidence is that in the twenty-first century the incidence of warfare is again increasing. The BA War Studies programme explores this depressingly consistent phenomenon, but it is not military history – though it may contain some. Nor is it, we would contend, peace studies, with which it shares many characteristics, but which normally has a wider remit including social violence and a more applied aspect. Put simply, War Studies is, as the name suggests, the study of war. War Studies asks fundamental questions such as what is war, how do wars start, and how do they end? What are the laws of war, what are the morals and ethics of war – if indeed there are any - and is there such a thing as a 'just' war? How has war changed over time and how can wars be prevented? As Trotsky said, 'War is the locomotive of history' and so war studies is also concerned with the accelerated social transformations that war brings in its wake.

The War Studies programme will appeal to the student interested in history generally, military history and warfare, politics, international relations and current affairs. As a student in the programme you will develop similar skill sets to other students studying History, Media/Film, and English Literature; therefore, when you graduate you will enjoy similarly broad employment opportunities to graduates from those types of programmes. Additionally, you will gain an insight into the processes involved in the development, shape, social consequences and resolution of armed conflict over time and as these elements affect contemporary events.

Consequently, possession of a war studies award, as conceived here, will be particularly valuable for you as a citizen, and you will find its associated competencies are readily transferable to many occupations and careers such as those in the armed forces, the intelligence services, the Diplomatic Service, the Civil Service, journalism, the media, commerce, banking, teaching, museum and heritage management, and many other occupations requiring analytical ability and

a knowledge of international affairs and security-related issues. The critical, reflective and creative capacities fostered by the study of the subject will continue to be of value and relevance for you, both in further study and a range of employment you may undertake after you complete the War Studies programme. The value of War Studies as an academic discipline in this regard can be seen alike in your acquisition of certain essential skills (research, communication, the ability to analyse and interpret evidence) and in your development of a better understanding of the forces and factors that have shaped human societies and the contemporary world.

While there are several War Studies and war studies-related postgraduate programmes in the UK, there are relatively few undergraduate programmes. Most of these tend to emphasise international relations, political science or history, although many of the options on these programmes are shared with regular history degree programmes and have no direct relationship with armed conflict. The programme draws on existing history modules for several of its options, but these all have a direct relationship to armed conflict. Furthermore, along with its bespoke war studies modules, our programme enjoys a unique combination of disciplines including history, American studies, media/film, English literature, theology, peace studies, material culture and human geography.

Special Features of the Programme

- Multi and interdisciplinary approaches to the phenomenon of war.
- Access to a various visiting external speaker series and programme seminar series on campus, and access to a series of lectures given locally, such as the York Historical War Analysis Group.
- An employability element that introduces students to the practical application of the skills developed on the programme to future careers. In Level 5 of the programme students have the opportunity to undertake a project or placement which will give them practical experience of working in the wider community and exploring the relevance of their studies in a variety of personal, cultural and career contexts.
- The programme also makes use of local expertise and resources from the heritage industry such as the Yorkshire Air Museum (see 'Elvington' above); the York Cold War Bunker; the Kohima Museum at Imphal Barracks, York; and the York Army Museum; the Yorkshire Film Archive; and war veterans living in the local area.

Admissions criteria

You must meet the University's general entry criteria for [undergraduate](#) study.

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/>).

If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Accredited Prior \(Experiential\) Learning \(APL/APEL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aims

- to introduce students to a range of approaches to the study of war
- to encourage students to explore the implications and applications of their academic study in the wider society to which they belong
- to enable students to develop a range of generic conceptual skills including information gathering, understanding, analysis, application of theory and principle, synthesis and evaluation
- to enable students to develop skills of communication, teamwork, self-management and organisation and problem solving in order to enhance opportunities for personal and social fulfilment both within and beyond the University community
- to provide progressive opportunities for students to develop as co-operative and independent learners

- to provide students with recognised qualifications to undertake further academic study and to compete successfully in a diverse employment market
- to offer a period of study abroad for suitably qualified candidates
- to foster a lasting interest in their chosen area of study

Programme learning outcomes

FHEQ L4

Students who gain the award specified will have demonstrated the following learning outcomes:

1. Knowledge of a range of disciplinary approaches to the study of the phenomenon of war.
2. The ability to use a range of secondary and primary sources with tutor guidance.
3. An ability to evaluate a range of sources of information, in a variety of media in terms of their value and limitations.
4. An ability to use a range of study skills, appropriate to the study of warfare.
5. The ability to communicate a body of information and ideas and to construct reasoned arguments in response to set questions.
6. Knowledge of the skills necessary for independent learning and successful academic study.

FHEQ L5

Students who gain the award specified will have demonstrated the following learning outcomes:

1. Knowledge and critical understanding of particular themes relating to the nature and significance of warfare as a human activity over time.
2. The ability to apply a variety of concepts, theories and methods from a range of disciplines to the analysis of the phenomenon of warfare.
3. The ability to construct a cohesive argument drawing upon an extended range of primary and secondary material.
4. An ability to undertake critical analysis and interpret evidence.
5. An ability to effectively employ communication, presentation and research skills and demonstrate a capacity for independent study.
6. The ability to apply subject expertise in a practical context related to the community and the world of work.

FHEQ L6

Students who gain the award specified will have demonstrated the following learning outcomes:

1. Detailed knowledge and understanding of specific issues and problems relating to the nature and significance of warfare as a human activity over time.
2. Ability to apply sophisticated concepts, theories and methods from wide variety of disciplines to the analysis of the phenomenon of warfare.
3. Confidence and sophistication in the handling of specialist secondary sources and a range of primary source material
4. Ability to construct a reasoned argument, synthesise relevant information and exercise critical judgement appropriate to the study of warfare at degree-level.
5. The necessary independence required to manage their own learning and research, including completion of an extended piece of research work.
6. The qualities and transferable skills necessary for graduate-level employment.

Programme structure

Semester 1 of Level 4 constitutes the foundation on which the programme is erected. It will introduce you to the basic concepts of War Studies, the mechanics of study at undergraduate level and the different disciplines contributing to the programme at this university. The module *War and the Media* in semester 2 extends this process, introducing you to both the role of the media in the representation and reportage of war, and the employment of media resources as research artefacts and communication mediums within the discipline. You will be presented with a number of module choices throughout the programme permitting you to pursue your particular interests within the area and carve out an informal pathway through the programme. The spine of compulsory modules will provide you with the opportunity to develop the necessary skills and background knowledge for the maximum exploitation of your other modules. A coherent, holistic overview of armed conflict is provided by the sequence of modules: *Why Wars Begin* at level 4, *The Face of Battle* at Level 5 and within *Religious Approaches to War & Peace* at Level 6. In Semester 2 of Level 4 you will take an experiential learning module optimised for War Studies students. A final 40 credit dissertation module spread over two semesters at Level 6 will allow you to explore in detail an area or issue in War Studies in which you are particularly interested and provide you with an opportunity to bring to bear the various research techniques you have developed over the course of the programme as an independent piece of research, with the guidance of a supervisor. You will also have the option of applying for a one semester international exchange at a university elsewhere in Europe or North America. This exchange takes place in the first semester of the second year of the programme. Additionally, you will have the option of supplementing your War Studies programme by taking an extra-curricular language module, if you so wish.

The part-time programme takes place over six academic years, during which you will take three 20 credit modules per academic year and one or two modules per semester. As with the full-time programme, you must take all compulsory modules, and you must take the dissertation module over two consecutive semesters in your final year.

Modules for the Programme

Code	FHEQ Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Status of Module*
1WS001	4	1	Introduction to War Studies	20	C
1WS002	4	1	Why Wars Begin	20	C
1HI500	4	1	War and Society	20	C
1WS003	4	2	War and the Media	20	C
1HI501	4	2	Contemporary Crisis	20	O
1AS201	4	2	America's Century: United States Foreign Affairs in the 20th Century	20	O
1HI502	4	2	Empires	20	O
2HI505	5	1	Age of Revolution, c1780-1830	20	O
2HI503	5	1	Reds: Rise and Fall of Soviet Communism	20	O
2HI507	5	1	History, Film & Television	20	O
2HI508	5	1	International Organisations in the Twentieth Century	20	O
2WS003	5	1	War in the West, 1940-1945	20	O
2WS001	5	2	Experiential Learning for War Studies	20	C
2WS002	5	2	The Face of Battle	20	C
2EN511	5	2	Conflicting Words	20	O
2HI506	5	2	The Sleeping Dragon: China 1911-1997	20	O
3WS002	6	1/2	War Studies Dissertation Module	40	CA
3WS001	6	1	Cyber Warfare	20	O
3RS026	6	1	Religious Approaches to War & Peace	20	O
3HI504	6	1	US Conflict on the East Asian Mainland	20	O
3HI503	6	2	Origins of the Second World War	20	O

3HI514	6	2	The Republic in Danger: France in the World, 1914-62	20	O
3HI502	6	2	The First Crusade: Europe and the Near East, 1090 – 1128	20	O
3AS200	6	2	Cinema of Conflict: Trauma and American Film and TV	20	O
3AS203	6	2	The Nation Divided: The Civil War Era in American Life	20	O
3WS003	6	2	War in the East	20	O

***C**: Compulsory, **CA**: Compulsory for award, **O**: option

Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching & Learning

The BA War Studies programme's teaching and learning methods are designed to foster your knowledge of and enthusiasm for the investigation of the phenomenon of war, stimulate your engagement with and ownership of the learning process; encourage in depth analysis; reinforce critical thinking skills; encourage you to reflect on and take responsibility for your own learning; and take proactive account of your particular circumstances and needs to ensure your maximum participation. The programme exploits its multi-disciplinary origins by drawing its philosophy of learning, teaching and assessment from the best practice that is offered among its contributing disciplines. During the course of your programme you will deepen your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon of war and develop the skills and qualities which will equip you for graduate employment, postgraduate study and lifelong learning.

During the course of your programme you will encounter a balance of different learning and teaching strategies, modes of analysis, types of sources and modes of assessment in order to explore the phenomenon of warfare from as many different perspectives as possible and to explore and test a broad expanse of subject knowledge and a wide range of competencies and skills. This approach also serves to foster your intellectual agility, while providing the variety and varying tempo to maintain your interest and engagement. Contact teaching, supported open learning and independent study are integrated within programme modules so that your study beyond the classroom both reinforces and primes the contact sessions, as well as encouraging and extending your independent learning.

You will encounter an increasing variety of teaching forms and methods as you proceed through the programme from the foundation Level 4 through Levels 5 and 6 where the programme becomes increasingly interactive and specialised with a view to developing your critical, reflective and research skills over time. You will be encouraged and assisted to develop your independent learning, and the promotion of increasingly independent research skills over the course of the programme will culminate with your completion of a research dissertation at Level 6.

As an integral part of its teaching methodology, the War Studies programme employs a number of field trips, which exploit the rich vein of experiential opportunities offered by the City of York and its surrounding area. Some of these are integral elements of specific modules, such as those on the module 'The Face of Battle', while some are free standing options, which students can use to add to the individualised personal portfolios of skills and experiences, which are such an important part of the contemporary higher education experience. These trips provide a first-hand practical dimension, beyond that available in class, to some of the elements introduced in the programme, which might otherwise remain obscure or abstract in the student's consciousness. The sites explored are highly evocative and are designed around specific objectives so that participants can easily make connections between the focus of the field trip and the concepts they are learning in their programme. Thus, a visit to the site of the Battle of Towton provides a practical illustration of the spatial characteristics of the medieval battlefield; a trip to the airfields at Pocklington and Elvington affords students a first-hand appreciation of the physical application of classical airpower theory during the Second World War; and a visit to the York Cold War Bunker invites students to 'think the unthinkable'. Experience suggests that such field trips also often serve as excellent stimuli for the development of dissertation ideas and even postgraduate projects following on from the present programme.

The War Studies programme reflects the diversity of research interests and teaching enthusiasms of the teaching team. This serves to keep the programmes fresh and up-to-date from both a subject content and a pedagogical point of view so that when you complete your

programme of study your BA in War Studies will be more than just a piece of paper: it will serve as a genuine building-block towards your chosen career, or towards postgraduate study.

Each module has a VLE module summary which will provide you with full details of the purpose and organisation of the module, assessment requirements, class schedules, a programme of content and appropriate learning resources and bibliographical guidance. This will be supplemented by other study materials which you will be able to access independently during the course of the module. You will be encouraged to use the widest possible range of resources for your studies, including books, journals, internet and visual material, archives and the resources of the local community and region such as museums, galleries and historic buildings.

For all modules on the programme, individual tutorial contact between yourself and your tutor is an integral part of the timetabled learning experience and is a crucial vehicle for providing formative feedback on your work, addressing your individual study needs and fostering your personal academic development. You will benefit from individual tutorial support, with regard to course work preparation, feedback on assessment, examination revision, resources, academic study skills and general module advice.

The War Studies programme emphasises the institutional priorities of 'graduate-ness' and 'employability' as outlined in the University's strategic agenda. The primary objective of War Studies is to enrich your life experience in a general sense by stimulating and developing your critical faculties and fostering a capacity and enthusiasm for lifelong-learning. Your preparation for graduate employment also features high on our agenda and thus the programme is optimised to prepare you for a range of occupations involving the synthesis and dissemination of complex ideas and arguments, the development of case studies, the comparison and explanation of empirical evidence, teamwork, working to specific deadlines, self-motivation and self-direction, and effective communication to a range of audiences. Thus, key transferable skills are embedded in the programme at all levels. During the programme you will be encouraged to reflect on your skills development and career plans through structured contact with Academic Tutors and the use of appropriate support services such as the University Careers Service. You will take an experiential learning module at Level 5, designed around a negotiated experiential learning component that may take the form of a work placement or independent project depending on your particular needs and requirements. The module will cater for a diverse student body by enabling you to exploit the generic vocational relevance of the subject area by negotiating placements, as far as possible, in those areas closest to your developing career objectives. At the same time the module provides self-developmental opportunities for those non-traditional students for whom work placements are inappropriate.

Assessment

You will be assessed by a balance of different forms including: essays, seen and unseen exams, reports, research problems, oral assignments and presentations, seminar presentations, group work, portfolios, a dissertation and other appropriate assessment forms. We use these different forms of assessment to test different skills and abilities, including your ability to utilise knowledge creatively to construct a reasoned argument, your ability to identify conclusions and communicate these persuasively orally and/or in writing; your engagement with a wide range of sources in a variety of media to effectively extract and present key information, analyses and conclusions; your selection and assessment of sources in terms of their relevance and quality in support of fulfilling specific analytical tasks; your demonstration of appropriately wide-ranging theoretical, conceptual and empirical knowledge in relation to specific issue areas; your use of case-study knowledge to construct relevant theory in specific issue areas; and your selection and use of theory to assess competing explanations of outcomes in case studies. All of these skills are applicable beyond the immediate context of your programme of study here at YSJU and they will serve you well in the future. The portfolios will involve a series of related exercises such as a bibliography, a source exercise and an essay, and are marked as a single integrated point of assessment.

The War Studies team recognises the importance of developing oral communication skills through a variety of informal formative methods. Every module, through seminars and group

document exercises, encourages the development of your oral communication skills, including debate, discussion, argument and presentations, which will underpin your summative written assessments. These oral communication skills will be assessed formatively, with tutors offering you feedback in the form of face-to-face tutorials and in the seminars. Modules may also include formal presentations.

You will receive regular constructive feedback during the course of your programme to help you evaluate your progress and identify how you can improve further, with particular attention being paid to building the skills of self-reflection and self-criticality. The feedback process is integrated with the tutorial system. You can discuss any aspect of your modules or programme with your tutors in contact sessions and by email, and you can seek formal tutorials at any time. These are likely to be particularly useful when you are preparing for assessed work and some modules formalise these formative tutorials. You will receive written feedback for all assessed work via the VLE within three weeks of your submission of the assignment. This will use the formal feedback formats appropriate to the programme in which the module is housed. In most cases you will get a pro-forma with two components: a matrix based on the School's Marking Criteria and a short series of prose comments. This feedback is designed to appraise you of exactly how well you have done and the degree classification level at which you are currently operating, details of where there is room for improvement, and advice about how you might achieve this. You will be encouraged to seek a further tutorial in which these details can be discussed and expanded upon. These post-assignment feedback tutorials also are formalised in some modules. Thus feedback and tutorials have a formative 'feed forward' role which involves you in a dialogue with your tutors.

Progression and graduation requirements

The University's [general regulations for undergraduate awards](#) apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section.

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University Mission Statement](#) [see page two]
- [Strategic Plan 2015-20](#) [see page four]
- [QAA subject benchmark statement](#)
- [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#)

Further information

Further information on the programme of study may be obtained from:

- Admissions entry profile (Admissions)
- Programme validation document (Registry – Academic Quality Support)
- Regulations (Registry – Academic Quality Support)
- Student programme handbook (school)
- Module handbooks (school)
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Date written / revised: 06/01/16, July 2017
first entry to the programme is 2016/17