

Programme Specification

Award and title: BA (Hons) History

<i>School:</i>	Humanities
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2026-27
<i>in the month(s) of</i>	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>	N/A
<i>Exit awards:</i>	BA (Ord) History Certificate of Higher Education History Diploma of Higher Education History
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	V100
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	VT17 (American Studies) QV31 (English Literature) L2K4 (War Studies)
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	History (2014)
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Undergraduate periods of study Full-time/Part-time
<i>Language of study:</i>	English
<i>Paired with Foundation Year</i>	Yes
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	Yes
<i>Placement Year opportunity:</i>	Yes

Introduction and special features

Introduction

The History programme is structured to enable you to study different types and periods of history while providing opportunities for more specialist independent study and research as you move from Levels 4 to 6.

- It begins in the first year with a range of modules which explore the skills and techniques necessary for the study of history at degree level. These modules will also familiarise you with different approaches to the study of the past and provide an introduction to the main historical periods and approaches which will feature in later stages of the degree programme.
- In the second year, modules concentrate on key periods or themes in British, European, American and world history, allowing you to develop your own interests and specialise if you wish in the history of particular periods or geographical regions. You will be given thorough guidance throughout your time here by your Academic Tutors in making your module choices.
- In the final year you will research a dissertation on a topic of your choice alongside a chosen selection of modules which offer in-depth study of a particular period or historical debate.

The modularised structure of the programme means that at all stages you have a choice of topics and periods of study, with freedom to construct a programme which combines a secure breadth of historical knowledge with your own interests and preferences.

Special features

The History programme at York St John University is distinguished for the following reasons:

- We offer a wide range of modules and specialisms which allows you to focus on the kinds of history which appeals to you.
- In the second year of the programme you will have the opportunity to undertake a project or placement which will give you practical experience of working in the wider community and exploring the relevance of your studies in a variety of personal, cultural and career contexts, as well as the opportunity to engage in exciting projects. This will be in the module, *History, Community and Culture* (although if you do the study abroad programme in semester 1, you will have an equivalent experience as part of the *Making History* module).
- We have a team of dedicated staff, who have an exceptional record of providing support to students (reflected in consecutive high scores in the support categories of the NSS).
- There is an optional exchange, which involves students studying for one semester (usually in the first half of the second year) at a university elsewhere in Europe or North America.
- At all levels of the programme key skills are fully integrated into academic study and you are encouraged to reflect self-critically on your performance and to prepare yourself for your future career or postgraduate study.
- You will be taught by academic staff who are active researchers. Our research informs our teaching. In your final year, you will work with members of staff on their specific research specialisms at the same time that they are developing exciting new directions in their particular field.
- Field trips are an enhanced feature of the programme with students invited to attend trips, for example to museums, monasteries or castles as well as explore the history on their doorstep in York. Some field trips may involve a cost to students.
- You will belong to a community of dedicated historians, with the opportunity for celebratory moments, and to work closely with a personal academic tutor.

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 [Recognition of prior learning \(RPL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aim(s)

The specific aims of the History programme are:

- To foster a lasting interest in, and enjoyment of, the study of History;
- To introduce you to a range of approaches to the study of the past, offering opportunities to explore different periods and types of history, as well as for specialisation and independent study and research;
- To encourage you to explore the implications and applications of your academic study in the wider society to which you belong;
- To enable you to compete successfully in a diverse employment market through work-related learning activities, and by being able to demonstrate an ability to solve complex problems through independent critical thinking, utilising a range of information, and presenting solutions in oral and written form.

Programme learning outcomes

Level 4

On successful completion of Level 4, you will be able to:

- 4.1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of historical approaches to the past.
- 4.2 Interpret a range of sources, secondary and primary, with guidance from your tutor, to form a scholarly argument.
- 4.3 Identify the value and limitations of competing sources of historical information.
- 4.4 Demonstrate a basic proficiency in study skills relevant to the History Subject area.

Level 5

On successful completion of Level 5, you will be able to:

- 5.1 Apply knowledge and understanding of a range of historical themes, regions and periods, within a global context.
- 5.2 Compose a coherent and critically structured argument, using an expanded range of primary and secondary material.
- 5.3 Analyse the historiography of a topic in order to assess competing scholarly debates.
- 5.4 Employ skills in communication, research and independent study.
- 5.5 Apply subject expertise in a practical context related to the community and the world of work.

Level 6

On successful completion of Level 6, you will be able to:

- 6.1 Show a systematic understanding of specific historical issues, theories and contexts through a range of special subjects.
- 6.2 Evaluate a critical understanding of the development of history as a discipline and the relevance of historiographical debate in a specialised context.
- 6.3 Exemplify confidence and sophistication in the handling of specialist secondary sources and a range of primary source material.
- 6.4 Construct and critically analyse complex arguments.
- 6.5 Design and undertake a piece of extended independent research that demonstrates an in-depth knowledge, understanding and analysis of a specifically historical topic or theme.
- 6.6 Make use of necessary skills for employment or future study, such as taking the initiative and asserting personal responsibility.

Programme structure

LEVEL 4 (Single Honours)

Modules at level 4 explore different approaches to the past and introduce you to a range of methodologies and historical skills. Modules at this level include a combination of ancient, medieval, early modern and modern history, so that you are also introduced to different historical periods and approaches (including social, cultural, political and international history). This will enable you to make cross-chronological comparisons, informing your choices at other levels. All modules at this level incorporate key subject skills, as well as establishing foundations for optional paths which you can follow or construct at subsequent levels. The compulsory module *Researching and Presenting the Past* ensures that you are provided with a common practical grounding in subject skills and introduced to different varieties of history and the ways in which academic history interacts with the wider social and cultural community. In semester 1 of level 4 for Single Honours students there is a compulsory diet; in semester 2 you choose three options from a choice

of four modules. You will receive information about these modules upon your arrival the University and make your choice within the first few weeks of your time at York St John.

LEVEL 5 (Single Honours)

Modules at Level 5 incorporate and develop conceptual approaches and methodologies introduced at level 4 with a variety of period settings and the study of themes dealing with the history of different countries and regions. The choice of options will be organised in such a way that enables you to further develop a breadth of study across different time periods and geographical spaces. You will have guided choice, meaning that you will select an option of History before c. 1800 and after c. 1800, representing our broad range of historical periods. Likewise, you will select two modules from two or three groups of modules that reflect the global reach of our programme. For example, if you are interested in themes of social and cultural history at level 4 in *Global York: A Social and Cultural History of the City* you might follow this at level 5 with *Victorians: Food, Science and Society*. As well as allowing these connections to be made between levels 4 and 5, the optional modules at level 5 are also designed to provide a basis for more specialised study of themes and periods at level 6, so that for instance the module *Pageantry, Power and Patriotism*, offers an appropriate preparation for the level 6 special subject in medieval history, which, depending on staff research interests, may be *The Wars of the Roses*.

At level 5, aside from modules which focus on major themes or periods in British, European, American and world history, you will look at the applications of History beyond the academic sphere in the media, the community and the world of work. Single Honours students will take *History, Community and Culture*, which includes a project or placement. You may have the opportunity to spend the first semester of level 5 studying abroad (in Europe or the USA), for which you will negotiate your own programme with the Study Abroad Coordinator. Students who study abroad in semester 1 will incorporate an equivalent project or placement into their learning in the semester 2 compulsory module, *Making History*. This module will support you to become an independent researcher as you develop the necessary knowledge and skills to design and complete your dissertation at level 6. You will receive information about these modules early in your second semester of Level 4 studies and make your module choice around this time, depending on internal University deadlines.

LEVEL 6 (Single Honours)

You will take the 40-credit dissertation, in which you research and write 10,000 words on a topic of your choice (developed in conjunction with a supervisor). In addition, you select four further special subjects. Each of the level 6 modules on offer provides in-depth study of a particular period or controversy. The level 6 optional modules embody progression from level 5 in a number of respects, involving you in more complex and specialist historical controversies and in particular requiring you to study historical periods more fully through primary source analysis. There is increased emphasis on seminar-based learning and student independence. The format of level 6 allows you to give your programme a geographical or period emphasis (it would for example be possible to construct a level 6 programme which was focussed largely on medieval, early modern or contemporary in content) and the level 6 modules are also integrated into thematic areas established at the previous two levels (for example, a student who had studied *America: An Empire of Liberty?* at level 4 and *The Nation Divided* at level 5 might take the special subject in the history of the American presidency, whereby the content could be 'Reagan and his America', at level 6). You will receive information about these modules early in your second semester of Level 5 studies and make your module choice around this time, depending on internal University deadlines.

Programme structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					compulsory or optional to take C or O	non-compensable or compensable NC or X
HIS4008M	4	1	Researching and Presenting the Past	20	C	x
HIS4009M	4	1	Global York: A Social and Cultural History of the City	20	C	x
HIS4010M	4	1	War and Society	20	C	x
Choose three modules from the following options below						
HIS4011M	4	2	The Visible Past	20	O	x
HIS4012M	4	2	People and Nature: An Environmental History	20	O	x
AMS4007M	4	2	The United States: Empire of Liberty?	20	O	x
HIS4015M	4	2	A Century in Crisis	20	O	x
HIS5001M	5	1	History, Community and Culture	20	C	x
HIS5002M	5	2	Making History	20	C	x
Choose 40 credits for semester 1 and 40 credits for semester 2 from the options below (you will be guided to choose modules that reflect our chronological and geographical range):						
HIS5003M	5	1 or 2	Pageantry, Power and Patriotism: Late Medieval England, 1300-1450	20	O	x
HIS5004M	5	1 or 2	Watchers and the Watched: Society in Early Modern England, c. 1540-1670	20	O	x
HIS5005M	5	1 or 2	Tudor Women: Agency and Authority	20	O	x
HIS5006M	5	1 or 2	Reds! The Rise and Fall of Soviet Communism	20	O	x
HIS5007M	5	1 or 2	Victorian Grubs: Food, Science and Society	20	O	x
AMS5002M	5	1 or 2	From Slavery to Freedom	20	O	x
AMS5006M	5	1 or 2	The United States since 9/11	20	O	X
HIS5013M	5	1 or 2	The Republic in Danger	20	O	x
HIS5008M	5	1 or 2	A United Kingdom? Britain, 1707-1837	20	O	x
AMS5003M	5	1 or 2	The Nation Divided: America in the era of the Civil War	20	O	x
HIS5009M	5	1 or 2	The Great Society: America in the 1960s	20	O	x
HIS5010M	5	1 or 2	Mao's China: From Empire to Communism	20	O	x
HIS5011M	5	1 or 2	The Roman Empire: Tiberius to Domitian (14-96)	20	O	x
HIS5012M	5	1 or 2	Historical Specialisms	20	O	x
CRW5003M	5	1 or 2	Writing Reality: Creative Non-Fiction	20	O	X
HIS6001M	6	1 & 2	Dissertation in History	40	C	NC
Choose 40 credits for semester 1 and 40 credits for semester 2 from the options below:						
HIS6013M	6	1 or 2	Special Subject in War Studies	20	O	x
HIS6003M	6	1 or 2	Special Subject in Ancient History	20	O	x
HIS6004M	6	1 or 2	Special Subject in Late Medieval England	20	O	x
WAR6007M	6	1 or 2	Special Subject in Modern International History	20	O	x

HIS6005M	6	1 or 2	Special Subject in Early Modern British History	20	O	x
HIS6006M	6	1 or 2	Special Subject in European Early Modern Social and Cultural History	20	O	x
HIS6007M	6	1 or 2	Special Subject in European History, 1700-1900	20	O	x
HIS6008M	6	1 or 2	Special Subject in Social and Cultural History, 1750-1900	20	O	x
HIS6009M	6	1 or 2	Special Subject in the History of the Cold War	20	O	x
AMS6010M	6	1 or 2	Special Subject in American History	20	O	x
HIS6010M	6	1 or 2	Special Subject in the History of the Soviet Union	20	O	x
AMS6011M	6	1 or 2	Special Subject in American Culture	20	O	x
HIS6012M	6	1 or 2	Special Subject in Modern British History	20	O	X

Please note that not all options may be available every year as they depend on student demand and staff availability.

Learning, teaching and assessment

Each module has a programme of structured learning which will include, in various combinations, formal structured class contact (e.g. lectures, seminars, workshops), independent study (reading, research, preparation of assignments) and, in some modules field trips and work-related activity. You are encouraged to use the widest possible range of resources for your studies, including books, journals, visual material, archives, e-learning sources, and the resources of the local community and region such as museums, galleries and historic buildings. For all modules, individual tutorial contact between you and your tutor(s) is an integral part of the learning experience and is a crucial vehicle for providing formative feedback on student work, addressing individual study needs and fostering your personal academic development.

The aim of the programme is to develop your progressive skills as autonomous independent thinkers and learners, but within a collaborative learning environment. Modules have a variety of assessment types, such as: essays, primary source exercises, reviews, site reports, open and closed examination, and reflective pieces. You are assessed through different aspects of writing skills in line with the History benchmarking recommendations. Varied work-related learning activities are embedded in each year of the programme and *History, Community and Culture*, in particular, is structured around a work-related or practically based learning experience and is assessed by means of a learning journal and a work-related report. The dissertation at level 6 meets the requirement for an extended piece of written work based on research and primary source material and is assessed on the basis of 10,000 words for 40 credits.

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 as non-compensable.

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University mission and values](#)
- [University 2026 Strategy](#)
- [QAA subject benchmark statements](#)
- [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](#)

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