

Programme Specification

Award and title: BA (Hons) History

<i>School:</i>	Humanities
<i>Subject area:</i>	History
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2027-28
<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>	Certificate of Higher Education History Diploma of Higher Education History BA (Ord) History
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	V100
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	QV31 (English Literature) LV21 (Politics) V200 (Religion) L2K4 (War Studies)
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	History (2022)
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Undergraduate periods of study ¹ for full time / part time
<i>Language of study:</i>	English
<i>Paired with Foundation Year</i>	Yes
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	Yes
<i>Opt-in YSJU Placement Year opportunity:</i>	Yes
<i>Excluding a year-long placement/professional experience, are there placement/field trip/work experience(s) totalling 20 days or more?</i>	No

Introduction and special features

Studying BA History at York St John University gives you the opportunity to explore a broad range of historical periods and themes while developing your skills as a critical thinker, researcher, and communicator. From the early medieval world to the present day, the programme encourages you to consider how the past shapes contemporary society and to engage directly with the rich historical landscape of the city of York and the wider region.

At each level of study, the degree builds your confidence and independence as a historian. You begin in first year by exploring diverse approaches to the past and developing the skills and techniques necessary for the study of history at degree level. In second year, modules adopt a narrower focus in key periods and

¹ The standard period of study will apply unless otherwise stated; please refer to the Regulations for Undergraduate/Taught Postgraduate/Professional Doctorate Awards <https://www.yorks-j.ac.uk/policies-and-documents/regulations/> for information on standard periods of study

themes in British, European, American, and wider world history. In the third year, you progress to specialist modules aligned with staff research interests, where you will engage with current scholarly debates and controversies. The third year culminates in an extended dissertation project, in a subject of your choice, where you exercise your advanced skills as an independent researcher. Throughout your degree, you will be supported by a team of dedicated lecturers who are also active researchers in areas such as social, cultural, political, international, and military history.

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

Distinctive features include:

- We offer a wide range of modules, allowing you to focus in areas of interests and developing specialism, from the early medieval period to histories of the twenty-first century.
- You are taught by research-active historians, meaning you will engage with current scholarly debates and discoveries.
- Modules such as *Global York: A Social and Cultural History of the City* and *History Pathways* connect your learning to the city of York's archives, museums, and heritage organisations. Modules such as *The Visible Past* and *People and Nature: An Environmental History* take learning further afield in the Yorkshire region through studying monasteries, castles, and the wider natural landscape. All site visits on the programme carry no cost to students.
- You will be treated as an active participant in shaping your learning through student-staff collaboration.
- You will develop transferable professional skills in each year of study. Through assessments testing a diverse range of skillsets, to placements and group projects, you gain valuable professional experience for life after university.
- You can spend a semester studying in North America during your second year.

Admissions criteria

You must meet the minimum entry requirements which are published on the programme specific webpage.

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 BA (Hons) History programme aims to:

1. Foster curiosity and enthusiasm for the study of the past while developing your ability to interpret, question, and communicate historical knowledge.
2. Enable you to understand how different societies, ideas, and events have shaped the world and to evaluate history's relevance to contemporary life.
3. Equip you with the research, analytical, and communication skills necessary for professional and personal success, aligned with York St John's Graduate Attributes of confidence, authenticity, resilience, enterprise, and professionalism.
4. Provide valuable experiences beyond the University that connect academic study of history with its practice in York and the wider region.

Programme learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

Level 4

- 4.1 Demonstrate understanding of a range of historical approaches, frameworks, and methods for interpreting the past.
- 4.2 Engage with and interpret primary and secondary sources to construct evidence-based arguments.
- 4.3 Identify the value and limitations of different kinds of historical evidence and perspectives.
- 4.4 Apply key academic and study skills relevant to the discipline of History.
- 4.5 Demonstrate awareness of how historical narratives are shaped by a range of contexts, including cultural and global.
- 4.6 Gain experience in applying historical thinking skills in practical, community or professional settings.

Level 5

- 5.1 Apply knowledge of a range of historical themes, regions, and periods within global and comparative contexts.
- 5.2 Construct coherent and persuasive arguments using a diverse body of primary and secondary sources.
- 5.3 Analyse historiographical debates and evaluate competing scholarly interpretations.
- 5.4 Demonstrate independence and initiative in research, communication, and critical thinking.
- 5.5 Reflect on how history connects to contemporary issues such as identity, memory, social justice, and sustainability.
- 5.6 Apply historical methods and insights in practical, community or professional contexts

Level 6

- 6.1 Demonstrate systematic and critical understanding of specialised historical topics, theories, and contexts.
- 6.2 Use advanced methods in analysing and interpreting specialist primary and secondary materials
- 6.3 Evaluate the development of History as a discipline and the relevance of historiographical debate in a specialised context.
- 6.4 Construct and critically evaluate nuanced, evidence-based arguments.
- 6.5 Demonstrate an informed understanding of how historical knowledge contributes to civic engagement and global awareness.
- 6.6 Evaluate and apply transferable and professional skills, including communication, digital literacy, problem-solving, and self-management, with initiative and independence.
- 6.7 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.

Programme structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					Compulsory (C) or optional (O)	non-compensable (NC) or compensable (X)
HIS4017M	4	1	Researching and Presenting the Past	20	C	X
HIS4018M	4	1	Global York: A Social and Cultural History of the City	20	C	X
HIS4019M	4	1	War and Society	20	C	X
Choose three modules from the following options below						
HIS4020M	4	2	The Visible Past	20	O	X
HIS4021M	4	2	People and Nature – An Environmental History	20	O	X
HIS4022M	4	2	World in Crisis	20	O	X
HIS4023M	4	2	The United States: Empire of Liberty?	20	O	X
HIS5029M	5	1 or 2	History Pathways	20	C	X
HIS5028M	5	1 or 2	Making History	20	C	X
Choose 40 credits for semester 1 and 40 credits for semester 2 from the options below						
HIS5016M	5	1 or 2	The Chinese Revolutions: From Empire to Communism	20	O	X
HIS5017M	5	1 or 2	European Conflict, c. 1660-1815	20	O	X
HIS5018M	5	1 or 2	From Slavery to Freedom: African American History and Culture	20	O	X
HIS5019M	5	1 or 2	Alfred the Great and the Idea of England	20	O	X
HIS5020M	5	1 or 2	Tyranny and Majesty: Kingship in Late Medieval England, 1300-1450	20	O	X
HIS5021M	5	1 or 2	'You've Never Had It So Good!' Britain 1945-1997	20	O	X
HIS5022M	5	1 or 2	Living and Dying in Revolutionary England, c. 1620 – c. 1670	20	O	X
HIS5023M	5	1 or 2	C'est La Vie! An Everyday History of Nineteenth-Century France	20	O	X
HIS5024M	5	1 or 2	Lives and Experiences of Sixteenth-Century Women	20	O	X
HIS5025M	5	1 or 2	The Great Society: America in the 1960s	20	O	X
HIS5026M	5	1 or 2	Russia between Lenin and Stalin, 1917-1953	20	O	X
HIS5027M	5	1 or 2	The United States since 9/11	20	O	X
HIS6014M	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						
HIS6015M	6	1 or 2	Cold War, Hot War: The International History of the Korean War	20	O	X
HIS6016M	6	1 or 2	The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: secrets, spies and security and Historical Inquiry	20	O	X
HIS6017M	6	1 or 2	Doomed Youth: A Social and Cultural History of the First World War	20	O	X

HIS6018M	6	1 or 2	Life After Death in the Early Middle Ages: Saints, Ghosts, and Dynasties	20	O	X
HIS6019M	6	1 or 2	Roads to War: The International Origins of World War Two	20	O	X
HIS6020M	6	1 or 2	A Cultural History of the Reformation	20	O	X
HIS6021M	6	1 or 2	The Wars of the Roses	20	O	X
HIS6022M	6	1 or 2	Myth, Murder, Memory: Traumatic Histories and the American Experiences	20	O	X
HIS6023M	6	1 or 2	Napoleonic Europe	20	O	X
HIS6024M	6	1 or 2	Life Through Letters, c. 1780-1850	20	O	X
HIS6025M	6	1 or 2	Watchers and the Watched: Surveillance in Early Modern England	20	O	X
HIS6026M	6	1 or 2	War Without Fronts: The Wars in Indochina, 1946-1975	20	O	X

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

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the table above as non-compensable. A non-compensable module is one that must be passed at the relevant level (with a mark of 40) in order to progress.

Learning, teaching and assessment

Teaching on the BA (Hons) History programme is research-led and designed to immerse you in an active and supportive scholarly community. You will learn from staff who are specialists in a wide range of fields in historical study and whose current research directly informs module content, ensuring that your learning is connected to the latest debates and discoveries.

Learning in BA (Hons) History is active and inquiry driven. From your first year onwards, you will work with a wide range of primary and secondary sources, developing the skills needed to ask complex historical questions and construct evidence-based arguments. You will be encouraged to take ownership of your learning through independent projects, group debates, and creative outputs such as podcasts, exhibitions, and policy papers. As you progress, you will move from guided learning to increasing autonomy, culminating in the Level 6 dissertation — an extended piece of original research on a topic of your choice, supervised individually by an expert in the field.

The programme combines traditional and innovative teaching methods to support your intellectual development and independence. On the one hand, you will take part in lectures, seminars, workshops, and student-led discussions, alongside one-to-one tutorials with your tutors. On the other, many modules integrate site-based learning, including teaching activities in archives, museums, and historic locations across York and the wider region. Modules such as *Global York: A Social and Cultural History of the City* and *The Visible Past* make use of York's rich heritage and built environment, allowing you to experience first-hand how history is interpreted and presented to the public. These activities strengthen your ability to engage with competing narratives of the past and connect the academic study of History with contemporary heritage and cultural practices.

Assessment at each year of study is varied, inclusive, and designed to support both academic and personal development. You will complete essays, primary source analyses, research portfolios, and reflective commentaries, as well as more applied assessments such as policy papers, exhibition plans and heritage reports, and outputs for a popular audience. Regular formative assessment helps you to respond to feedback and build confidence in your academic skills. The programme offers flexibility in assessment design, accessible learning materials and responsive tutor support.

Work-Related Experiential Learning (WREL) is embedded across the programme. Depending on the modules you study, you can expect activities such as visits to archives, museums and heritage sites;

workshops and guest speaker sessions with external professionals; working with cultural and heritage organisations; responding to client or stakeholder briefs; and producing work for public and professional audiences. This might include developing an exhibition plan with a local heritage organisation, producing a policy paper or podcast for an external stakeholder, or analysing a heritage site from a professional perspective. At Level 5, the core module *History Pathways* also provides the opportunity to undertake a 70-hour placement or substantial group project. Reflective assessments in each year of study encourage regular articulation of skills development and self-understanding of personal growth.

By the end of the programme, you will have completed an extended piece of independent research with confidence, evidence of the successful application of professional skills. You will also have developed a sophisticated understanding of how history is studied and communicated; the ability to evaluate evidence and argument with rigour; and the confidence to contribute to both scholarly debate and the public understanding of history.

Progression and graduation requirements

The University's [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, Culture and Values](#)
- [University 2026 Strategy](#)
- [QAA subject benchmark statements](#)
- [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](#)
- [Freedom of Speech Code of Practice](#)
- [The University's Approach to Dignity and Respect](#)

Date written / revised: December 2025

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