

## Programme specification

### BA (Hons) English Literature and History

Est.  
1841

YORK  
ST JOHN  
UNIVERSITY

<i>School:</i>	School of Humanities, Religion & Philosophy		
<i>Entry from:</i>	2019	<i>in:</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>			
<i>Exit awards:</i>	BA (Ord) English Literature and History Diploma of Higher Education English Literature and History Certificate of Higher Education English Literature and History		
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>			
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>			
<i>QAA benchmark group(s):</i>			
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	<a href="#">Undergraduate periods of study for 3 years<sup>1</sup></a> Full-time		
<i>Language of study:</i>	English		
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	Yes		

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## Introduction and special features

Joint Honours programmes give students the opportunity to combine two subjects from a range of areas in a structured way. The selected pairings are designed to complement one another and allow students to have a significant amount of choice and flexibility in relation to their learning experience. In addition, the Joint Honours pairings involve students engaging in a range of learning and teaching experiences and assessment opportunities.

The pairing of English Literature and History develops skills in critical thinking and analysis in response to a range of different types of texts. History is beneficial as mode of engagement and inquiry in relation to literary texts, and literature can help historians to analyse the past. You might find yourself referring to historical sources as part of your literary studies, as well as reading literary works as a way of developing your understanding of history. Studied together, these subjects allow students to gain a detailed understanding of the written word in all its forms, from historical sources and documents, to contemporary literary texts.

English Literature is a rich and vibrant area of study. At YSJU, we are a dynamic, engaged, and research-active team who are committed to providing our students with a cutting-edge education. By studying English Literature, you will have the opportunity to learn about a range of different genres, historical periods, and literary forms. Our philosophy is simple: *words matter*. Words shape the world we live in (books can and have changed the world) and the connections between the written page and the concerns of the 'real' world are a crucial part of the programme. Overall, the degree will enable you to develop your expertise as a reader and critic of a range of literary materials, whilst also supporting you in the development of a portfolio of professional skills which will aid you in the wider job market. As you become adept at independent learning, you will become a more sophisticated reader of texts, and you will find that your confidence as a writer and as a critic will increase as your degree progresses.

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<sup>1</sup> The standard period of study will apply unless otherwise stated

Through the course of a wide-ranging suite of modules, you will develop an extensive knowledge of both classic and contemporary texts, and will have the opportunity to gain some professional experience on our dedicated employability module, 'Literature at Work'. The choice of modules on offer will help you to develop your own interests and allow you to shape your degree accordingly. For example, students can choose to follow an historical pathway that might include modules such as 'Revolution and Response', which examines writing from the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, or 'The Victorian Novel', which focuses on nineteenth-century fiction. In addition, students can focus on other specialised areas represented by modules including 'Mapping America', 'Sick Novels: Literature and Disease', 'Science Fiction for Survival', and 'Gothic Origins'. We pride ourselves on a diverse and stimulating syllabus, and you might find yourself studying Native American writing, prison narratives, radical poetry, avant-garde writing, political polemics, Civil Rights literature, speculative fiction, LGBT rights literature, experimental writing, and literature of the Caribbean, as well as canonical writers such as Shakespeare, Dickens, and Austen, all as part of your English Literature degree.

A team of research-active academics who are all recognised in their respective specialisms will facilitate and guide your learning. We use a variety of assessment methods to help you develop different types of learning. You will not sit any traditional exams as part of your degree in English Literature, and instead you will be encouraged to try new forms of writing. In addition to more traditional assessments such as the essay, you might be asked to write a blog post, to compile a research portfolio, or even to curate an online exhibition. Field trips are an integral part of the programme, and students in recent years have had the opportunity to visit London, Stratford-upon-Avon, and Whitby, as well as local sites including Castle Howard and York Theatre Royal.

During your degree, you will develop a range of subject-specific and transferable skills. As well as having the opportunity to become an adept reader, critic, writer, and researcher, you will also become highly skilled in critical thinking, problem solving, constructing and developing an argument, time-management, public speaking, and project management. These skills are all valued highly by employers, and you have the chance to develop more professional skills on our bespoke employability module 'Literature at Work'. On this module, you will be able to experience an external work placement, or choose to work on a team project (such as designing a publication or curating a small exhibition). Students regularly contribute to our popular Literature blog, *Point Zero*, which is an excellent way to gain relevant professional experience and exposure for your critical and creative perspectives.

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 as well as familiarising you with different approaches to the study of the past and providing 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 can, however, choose freely from the module diet available. You will be given thorough guidance throughout your time here by your Academic Tutors in making your module choices. In the final year all students research a dissertation on a topic of your choice alongside a chosen selection of modules which offer in-depth study of particular period or historical debate. The modularised structure of the programme means that at all stages students have a genuine choice of topics and periods of study, with real freedom to construct a programme which reflects your interests and preferences.

## **Special features**

We offer a wide range of modules which allows you to focus on the kinds of history which appeals to you.

- The History degree programme also incorporates a distinctive strand of 'Applied History' which introduces students to the practical application of historical skills, to the uses of history in non-historical contexts such as journalism, politics and the media, and to the relevance of historical study to future careers.
- 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.
- 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).
- Internationalisation: there is an optional exchange, which involves students studying for one semester (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 students are encouraged to reflect self-critically on their performance and to prepare themselves for their future careers or postgraduate study.
- Students will be taught by academic staff who are active researchers.
- Field trips are an enhanced feature of the programme with students invited to attend trips to museums, monasteries and castles as well as explore the history on their doorstep in York through the ages.
- The School benefits from a regular programme of visiting speakers.

### **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**

1. To encourage students to develop an informed and critical understanding of key themes, and debates within English Literature;
2. to introduce students 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
3. To enhance students' development as independent learners, and literary critics;
4. To support students in developing a range of transferable skills to equip them for employment and lifelong learning;
5. To encourage students to explore the implications and applications of their academic study in the wider society to which they belong;
6. To develop an ability to reflect critically on the process of researching, writing, analysing, and forming an academic argument;
7. 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;
8. to provide progressive opportunities for students to develop as co-operative and independent learners;

9. To provide a supportive learning environment that meets the needs of a diverse set of learners;
10. To enhance students' development of appropriate skills in communication, analysis, collaboration, research, and self-management.

### **Programme learning outcomes**

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

#### **Level 4**

- 1.1 Demonstrate awareness of key concepts in English Literature and History, including interdisciplinary approaches and theoretical perspectives.
- 1.2 Demonstrate awareness of as formal and generic conventions.
- 1.3 Demonstrate competence in the analysis of a variety of texts.
- 1.4 An understanding of the value and limitations of sources of information, in a variety of media
- 1.5 Communicate effectively using a range of basic skills appropriate for the audience and purpose.
- 1.6 Demonstrate a range of basic key transferable skills (including those for lifelong learning) appropriate for further study and future employment.
- 1.7 Demonstrate competence in applying critical and theoretical approaches to literary and historical texts, and to construct an argument.
- 1.8 The ability to communicate a body of information and ideas and to construct an historical argument
- 1.9 Understanding of the skills necessary for independent learning and successful academic study.

#### **Level 5**

- 2.1 Demonstrate a critical understanding and knowledge of English Literature, including an enhanced appreciation of historical and theoretical perspectives.
- 2.2 Knowledge and critical understanding of the history of particular themes, regions and periods, in a global context
- 2.3 Demonstrate critical awareness of research strategies particular to English Literature.
- 2.4 The application of a greater variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to a range of concepts, themes and topics, and distinguish between them
- 2.5 The ability to construct a coherent, structured argument drawing upon an expanded range of primary and secondary material, and to analyse and interpret evidence in a critical way
- 2.6 Effectively communicate information, ideas, arguments, and interpretations in a manner appropriate to the task and audience.
- 2.7 Demonstrate an ability to apply knowledge and skills effectively in decision making in the context of growing maturity as an independent learner.
- 2.8 Demonstrate transferable skills including organisation, time-management, decision-making, and the ability to apply subject expertise in a practical context related to the community and the world of work.

#### **Level 6**

- 3.1 Demonstrate a systemic understanding of English Literature, underpinned by a detailed awareness of historical and theoretical perspectives.
- 3.2 A systematic understanding of specific historical issues, theories and contexts through the study of a range of special topics
- 3.3 Synthesise and apply relevant critical and theoretical perspectives to their own research practice.

- 3.4 An ability to deploy an advanced conceptual understanding of the application of research skills and theoretical approaches to English Literature.
- 3.5 Work autonomously within a structured environment.
- 3.6 Manage and reflect critically upon increasingly independent learning.
- 3.7 Demonstrate transferable skills to an advanced level that prepares them for employment or further study.

**Please note:** 3.7 is compulsory for the award of BA (Hons) English Literature and History. Students enrolled on a Joint Honours degree may choose to write their dissertation in either subject.

## Programme Structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Status of Module*
1EN600	4	1	Introduction to Literary Studies I	20	C
1EN601	4	1	Writing, Research and Literature	20	O
1HI503	4	1	Researching and Presenting the Past	20	O
1HI500	4	1	War and Society	20	O
1HI504	4	1	The Making of Britain	20	O
1EN602	4	2	Introduction to Literary Studies II	20	C
1EN603	4	2	Theorising Literature: Power and Identity	20	O
1EN604	4	2	Canonicity	20	O
1HI502	4	2	Empires	20	O
1HI505	4	2	The Visible Past	20	O
1HI501	4	2	Contemporary Crisis	20	O
1HI506	4	2	Popular Protest	20	O
1AS201	4	2	America's Century	20	O
2HI512	5	1	The World After Rome	20	O
2HI505	5	1	The Age of Revolution c 1780-1830	20	O
2HI501	5	1	Flourishing of the Middle Ages	20	O
2HI503	5	1	Reds! The Rise and fall of Soviet Communism	20	O
2HI507	5	1	History, Film and Television	20	O
2HI509	5	1	The Making of Modern America	20	O
2HI508	5	1	International Organisation in the 20th century	20	O
2EN450	5	1 or 2	Literary Theory	20	O
2EN600	5	1 or 2	Civil War to Civil Society: British Literature, 1640-1740	20	O
2EN470	5	1	Adaptations	20	O
2EN601	5	1 or 2	Science Fiction for Survival	20	O
2EN602	5	1	Mapping America	20	O
2EN603	5	1 or 2	Revolution and Response: British Literature, 1740-1840	20	O
2EN604	5	1 or 2	Sick Novels: Literature and Disease	20	O
2EN605	5	1 or 2	From Harlem to Hip-Hop: African American Literature and Culture	20	O
2EN606	5	1 or 2	Shakespeare: Perspectives	20	O
2CW100	5	1	Writing Fiction	20	O

2CW101	5	1	Writing Reality: Creative Nonfiction	20	O
2HI502	5	2	History: Community and Culture		
2EN510	5	2	Literature at Work	20	O
2HI510	5	2	The Plague, Piety and Power	20	O
2AS201	5	2	From Slavery to Freedom	20	O
2HI504	5	2	The Age of Anxiety	20	O
2HI506	5	2	Sleeping Dragon	20	O
2HI500	5	2	Europe in the Age of Nationalism 1848-1914	20	O
2HI511	5	2	The Power of the Past in Early Modern Britain	20	O
2CW103	5	2	Writing Poetry	20	O
2CW104	5	2	Scriptwriting	20	O
2EN511	5	2	Conflicting Words	20	O
3HI507	6	1 & 2	History and American Studies: Special Study	40	CA if taken
3EN996	6	1 & 2	English Literature Dissertation	40	CA if taken
3CW204	6	1 & 2	Creative Writing Dissertation	40	CA if taken
3HI506	6	1	Dissertation (20 credit)	20	O
3HI505	6	1	Early Victorian England	20	O
3HI504	6	1	US Conflict on the East Asian Mainland	20	O
3HI515	6	1	The Wars of the Roses	20	O
3HI516	6	1	The Empire Strikes Back: Mikhail Gorbachev and the Collapse of the Soviet Union	20	O
3HI517	6	1	The English Revolution	20	O
3HI508	6	1	The Atlantic World in the Eighteenth Century	20	O
3CW201	6	1	Writing Genres	20	O
3CW202	6	1	Contemporary Writing 1: Innovation and Experimentation	20	O
3EN600	6	1 or 2	The Victorian Novel: Realism, Sensation, Naturalism	20	O
3EN601	6	1 or 2	The Experimental Century: Cultural Change in the Twentieth Century	20	O
3EN602	6	1 or 2	Gothic Origins	20	O
3EN603	6	1 or 2	The Making of Modern Drama	20	O
3EN608	6	1	Research Now 1	20	O
3AS203	6	2	The Nation Divided	20	O
3HI500	6	2	The Great Society	20	O
3HI503	6	2	Origins of the Second World War	20	O
3HI512	6	2	Late Anglo-Saxon England	20	O
3HI509	6	2	From British Empire to Commonwealth of Nations	20	O
3HI514	6	2	Republic in Danger: France in the World	20	O
3HI502	6	2	The First Crusade	20	O
3EN605	6	1 or 2	American Radicals: Outside the Canon	20	O
3EN270	6	1 or 2	Writing the Caribbean	20	O
3EN606	6	1 or 2	Cultures of the Now: Contemporary Writing	20	O
3EN290	6	2	Gender and Sexualities	20	O
3EN609	6	2	Research Now 2	20	O
3HI501	6	2	Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain	20	O
3HI510	6	2	The Italian Renaissance	20	O
3HI518	6	2	Doomed Youth	20	O

3HI506	6	1 or 2	History and American Studies: Special Study	20	CA if taken
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\***C**: Compulsory, **CA**: Compulsory for award, **O**: option or **E**: elective.

**Please note:** all modules are subject to staffing and timetable availability each year, in accordance with CMA regulations.

#### Level 4 choices

Students must choose 20 credits from either 1EN600: Writing, Research and Literature or 1HI503: Researching and Presenting the Past.

Students must select 6 modules, with a minimum of 40 credits and a maximum of 80 credits in each subject.

#### Level 5 choices

**Work-related learning:** students must select one of the employability modules, either 2EN510: Literature at Work or 2HI502: History: Community and Culture.

Students can choose a maximum of 20 credits from 2CW100: Writing Fiction, 2CW101: Writing Reality: Creative Non-Fiction, 2CW104: Scriptwriting and 2CW103: Writing Poetry.

Students must select 6 modules, with a minimum of 40 credits and a maximum of 80 credits in each subject.

#### Level 6 choices

Students must choose either 3EN996: English Literature Dissertation or 3HI507: History and American Studies: Special Study. Students can take 3CW103: Creative Writing Dissertation if they have taken/will take a Creative Writing module at Level 5 or 6.

Students can choose a maximum of 20 credits from 3CW100: Writing Genres or 3CW101: Experimental Writing: Theory and Practice.

Students must select 5 modules, including a dissertation module, with a minimum of 40 credits and a maximum of 80 credits in each subject. Students taking 3HI506: Dissertation (20 credit) must select 6 modules in total.

## Learning, teaching and assessment

### English Literature:

The aims of all our teaching is to help you to become a better writer and literary critic, to challenge you to consider new ideas and concepts, and to support you in understanding the complex connections between literature and contemporary society. Literature is a dialogic discipline: that is, informed discussions and debates are a crucial part of the learning process. We do not want students to be passive learners, but instead expect you all to be actively engaged and involved with your degree subject.

We use a range of teaching styles and settings to help support you during your time at University. You will attend lectures, seminars (groups of students with a tutor), tutorials (one-to-one meetings with a tutor), workshops, and experience collaborative learning (working with your fellow students), events, field trips, as well as independent study sessions, and times when you will need to use online resources through the University's Virtual Learning Environment.

Your first year with us is about supporting you in making the transition to university-level study. You will be assigned your own Academic Tutor, a member of staff who will meet with you and other students on a weekly basis during your first semester at YSJU. Modules such as 'Writing, Research and Literature' have been specially designed to help you adapt to the University

environment and the requirements of the subject. As you progress to your second and third year, you will be able to shape your degree according to your own research interests. You can choose to specialise in a certain genre, historical period, or literary form. We have a diverse range of modules for you to choose from, and you will have lots of opportunities to study types of literature that you might not have experienced previously (such as, for example, Caribbean literature, utopian writing, and creative non-fiction).

There are no exams, and your English Literature degree will be assessed through coursework. As well as writing essays, however, there are other assessment opportunities designed to help you develop new skills and prepare for graduate employment. You will encounter a wide range of assessment, including portfolios, close-reading exercises, and opportunities for reflective writing. Some modules are assessed by one piece of coursework (usually a portfolio) and you will have the chance to work on this throughout the semester. The feedback you will receive focuses on how you can improve your work for future assessment, and we encourage all students to keep a feedback folder to help keep track of their academic development. You will have the chance to work with published and professional writers, as our resident Royal Literary Fellow is available for additional tutorials and writing support.

In your final year, you will be ready to take on a bigger role in the management of your learning. You might find yourself leading a class discussion, or doing a non-assessed presentation in a seminar. You will write a dissertation (an extended project that runs for the whole academic year) on the subject of your choice, and with the support of an academic supervisor. In many ways, this is in the intellectual culmination of your degree, as you become an independent researcher and are required to manage your own academic project. Many of our students note that this is one of the most enjoyable sections of their degree, as they are specialising in a literary topic that they are passionate about, and are putting into practice the skills they have accrued during their time at York St John University.

## **History**

Modules at level 1 explore different approaches to the past, and introduce students to a range of methodologies and historical skills. Most modules at this level include a combination of medieval/early modern and modern history, so that students are also introduced to different historical periods and enabled to make cross-chronological comparisons (this will inform their choices at other levels). All modules at this level incorporate key subject skills, as well as establishing foundations for optional paths which students can follow or construct at subsequent levels. The compulsory module *Researching and Presenting the Past* ensures that all Single Honours students on the Programme 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 1 for Single Honours students there is a compulsory diet; in semester 2 they choose three options from a choice of five modules. Joint Honours students must take either *War and Society* or *The Making of Britain* in semester 1; they then may select optional modules.

Modules at Level 2 incorporate and develop conceptual approaches and methodologies introduced at level 1 with a variety of period settings and the study of themes dealing with the history of different countries and regions. The choice of options enables students to concentrate if they wish on medieval/early modern or modern/contemporary history, to give their programmes a particular geographical/period focus by selecting modules in British, European or American history (although students can pick freely from the modules on offer). For example, students interested in themes of national identity introduced at level 1 in *The Making of Britain* might follow this at level 2 with *Europe in the Age of Nationalism*. As well as allowing these connections to be made between levels 1 and 2, the optional modules at level 2 are also designed to provide a basis for more specialised study of themes and periods at level 3, so that for instance the module *The Power of the Past in Early modern Britain* offers an appropriate preparation for the level 3 module *Knowledge and Power in Early Modern England*. At level 2, aside from modules which focus on major themes or periods in British, European, American and world history, students 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, plus five optional modules. Joint Honours programme may take History, Community and Culture as their placement module or choose to take an equivalent employability skills module in their other subject area. Other modules at level 2, building on the practical skills acquired at level 1, examine, in the module History, Film and Television the use of history in non-historical contexts such as film, television and the media. Some students may spend the first semester of level 2 on an international academic exchange (in Europe or the US), for which they will negotiate their own programme of study abroad with the Head of Programme. Students must complete the level in accordance with University requirements to proceed to level 3. Joint Honours students select 3 modules.

Single Honours students must take the 40-credit Special Study, and research and write a dissertation of 10,000 words on a topic of their choice (selected on the basis of tutorial advice). In addition they select four further optional modules. Joint Honours students choose whether to complete their Special Study in History or their other subject, and whether to opt for the 40-credit or 20-credit, 5000-word version. They select optional modules to meet the requirements set out in the University regulations governing the classification and award of honours degrees.

Each of the level 3 modules on offer provides in-depth study of a particular period or controversy. The level 3 optional modules embody progression from level 2 in a number of respects, involving students in more complex and specialist historical controversies and in particular requiring them to study their periods more fully through primary source material. At this level, too, there is increased emphasis on seminar-based learning and student independence. The format of level 3 once again allows students to give their programme a geographical or period emphasis (it would for example be possible to construct a level 3 programme which was heavily medieval, early modern or contemporary in content) and the level 3 modules are also integrated into thematic areas established at the previous two levels (for example, a student who had studied War and Society at level 1 and Europe in the Age of Nationalism at level 2 might take The Origins of the Second World War at level 3.

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

The aim of the programme is to develop the progressive skills of students as autonomous independent thinkers and learners, but within a collaborative learning environment. Modules would typically include written coursework (essay, projects, reviews and other forms of written argument) and timed assessments. The assessment for most History modules includes a combination of course work and timed assessment, the latter being a maximum of 40% of the final module grade. The course work in most cases would include an essay component but other types of written assignment are also used (reviews, documentary exercises, site reports, photo-essays, case studies, to test different aspects of students' writing skills in line with the benchmarking recommendations). History, Community and Culture 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 Special Study at level 3 meets the requirement for an extended piece of written work based on research and primary source material and is assessed on the basis of a dissertation of 10,000 words for the 40 credit and 5,000 words for the 20-credit study.

### **Progression and graduation requirements**

The University's [general regulations for](#) choose an item: 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](#)

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*Date written / revised:* 18/08/17

3HI513 removed as part of annual module archiving.