

Programme specification

BA (Hons) History and American Studies

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YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

<i>Faculty:</i>	Faculty of Arts
<i>Entry from:</i>	September 2019
<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) in History and American Studies Diploma of Higher Education in History and American Studies Certificate of Higher Education in History and American Studies
<i>UCAS Code / GTTR / Other:</i>	VT17
<i>Joint Honours Combinations:</i>	Not applicable
<i>QAA Benchmark Group(s):</i>	Area Studies History
<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

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 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 one to three.

- 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.
- At the end of your second year you will have the opportunity to showcase your work as part of the Faculty of Arts *Create* festival, which is a celebration of all the work produced in the Faculty of Arts.
- 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 (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 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 Faculty benefits from a regular programme of visiting speakers.

American Studies reflects a whole range of critical approaches to explore the history and culture of the United States as well as an understanding of the American experience itself. It will, it is hoped, offer you an exciting programme which will encourage you to also reflect critically upon the predominance of the US over the last century or so in political, cultural, historical and literary terms and contexts, as well as on American Studies as a truly inter-disciplinary subject area. The taught modules have been carefully constructed to take you on a series of journeys, in order to offer multi-perspective interpretations of the United States. It is hoped that you will engage in an inter-connected sequence of debates which will lead you to a greater understanding of the complexity of the United States as a dynamic cultural construct as well as a geographical and political entity. It will also be appealing to those students who prefer greater diversity to the more narrow focus of a Single Honours degree. Captured under the QAA Subject Benchmarking for Area Studies, this approach enables you to 'acquire a unique depth and breadth of insight into the social, cultural and political dynamic of a particular region'.

Essential to American Studies (AS) is the approach of inter-disciplinarity: the study of the United States with the integration of related disciplines (History, Literature and Film Studies), and in particular the sharing of themes and methodologies of those other disciplines (particularly the approaches of cultural studies), which, when integrated, results in a broad-based and flexible programme. Although there are currently valuable pairings with History and Film Studies (within the Faculty of Arts), many of the stand-alone modules contained within American Studies programme themselves reflect an inherent inter-disciplinarity; (for example, there are strong

history, film and literature elements within AS modules such as *From Slavery to Freedom* and *The Making of Modern America*). So, not only will American Studies be attractive to those students who may have an interest in America, yet who do not wish to make a total commitment, it will also appeal to students primarily interested in a paired subject, for whom linkages with American Studies offers diversity in an interesting and challenging way. American Studies offers therefore a flexible as well as an integrated programme.

Certain broad themes will be addressed throughout each level, which can be summarised as follows: the exploration of the United States as an evolving cosmopolitan, democratic culture, shaped by immigration, ethnic diversity and racial tension; the emergence and evolution of the USA's global hegemony, and its impact upon the international community, especially Britain; and the nature and significance of contemporary US popular culture, especially film and TV, in a domestic and globalised context. Each of these themes will be developed with greater complexity as you progress through the programme.

American Studies also supports a broad constituency of learners and offers a curriculum that is attractive to home and international audiences. The inclusion of an exciting optional, one semester exchange with the USA (as well as the nature of the subject itself) embraces the internationalisation ambitions of the University.

Special features

- 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 yourselves for your future careers.
- Students will work with a range of staff throughout their time on the programme; they will support students and bring their own research to the programme.
- The Faculty benefits from a regular programme of visiting speakers.
- A special feature of the programme is the optional international exchange, which involves students studying for one semester (in the first semester of the second year) at a university in the US.
- At the end of their second year students have the opportunity to showcase their work as part of the Faculty of Arts 'Create' festival, which is a celebration of all the work produced in the Faculty of Arts.

Admissions Criteria

The programme complies with the University's general entry criteria for [undergraduate](#) study. Tariff points are set for each given year, the details of which are available at: <http://www.yorksj.ac.uk/study/admissions/admissions-policy.aspx>

For the full entry criteria, please refer to the programme's prospectus page: <http://www.yorksj.ac.uk/undergraduate/undergraduate-study.aspx>

The University makes provision for entry to its programmes of study with advanced standing on the basis of Accredited Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) or Accredited Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) – please refer to APL (APCL and APEL) Policy (SRA07) which can be found at: <http://www.yorksj.ac.uk/documents/directory/university-policies/idoc.ashx?docid=8cbb383a-7c0c-439a-9b67-3066fe529ffa&version=-1>

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

Programme Aims

The History programme aims are:

- 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
- 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 an optional period of study abroad
- to foster a lasting interest in, and enjoyment of, their chosen area of study
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The American Studies programme aims are:

- To achieve a growing sophisticated knowledge of the history, society and culture of the USA
- To understand the significance of the US within a global context.
- To develop interdisciplinary study skills and approaches in relation to the study of the USA.
- To demonstrate transferable employment-relevant or research key skills.

Programme Learning Outcomes

Level 1 / FHEQ L4 (Certificate of Higher Education)

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

History:

1. An understanding of a range of historical and interdisciplinary approaches to the past
2. The ability to use a range of sources, secondary and primary, with tutor guidance
3. A understanding of the value and limitations of sources of information, in a variety of media
4. A basic proficiency in a range of study skills, appropriate for the subject area(s) studied
5. The ability to communicate a body of information and ideas and to construct an historical argument
6. Understanding of the skills necessary for independent learning and successful academic study

American Studies:

1. An understanding and content knowledge of the history and culture of the USA, and its significance within a global context.
2. A knowledge of the theoretical perspective of inter-disciplinarity for an understanding of the USA and the concept of American Studies.
3. Academic skills relevant to American Studies, including an ability to evaluate, interpret and present in writing, as well as develop basic transferable skills.

Level 2 / FHEQ L5 (Diploma of Higher Education)

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

History

1. Knowledge and critical understanding of the history of particular themes, regions and periods, in a global context
2. The application of a greater variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to a range of concepts, themes and topics, and distinguish between them
3. 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
4. A developing understanding of historiography and its application to historical debate
5. Communication, presentation and research skills, with growing capacity for independent study
6. The ability to apply subject expertise in a practical context related to the community and the world of work [for Joint Honours students this aim may be fulfilled in relation to their other subject area]

American Studies

1. Critical understanding and content knowledge of the history and culture of the USA, including an enhanced appreciation of historiographical and theoretical perspectives.
2. An ability to apply underlying concepts, inter-disciplinary skills and approaches to American Studies.
3. Academic skills development, including awareness of independent research strategies, and enhanced facility for written and oral analysis, argument, and expression; as well as enhanced transferable skills, within a career relevant context.

Level 3 / FHEQ L6 (BA Ordinary)

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

History

1. A systematic understanding of specific historical issues, theories and contexts through the study of a range of special topics

2. A critical understanding of the development of history as a discipline and the relevance of historiographical debate in a specialised context
3. Confidence and sophistication in the handling of specialist secondary sources and a range of primary source material
4. The ability to construct and analyse complex arguments appropriate to degree level historical study
5. The necessary independence required to manage their own learning and research, [for Joint Honours students this outcome may be fulfilled in relation to their other subject area]
6. Academic and personal skills appropriate to graduate level and future employment

And for Honours Degree

7. Synthesise and apply complex theoretical perspectives and concepts to an extended piece of written work

American Studies

1. A systematic understanding of the history and culture of the United States, underpinned by a detailed awareness of historiographical and theoretical contexts.
2. Deploy an advanced conceptual understanding to the application of inter-disciplinary skills and approaches to American Studies.
3. An ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within the discipline

And for Honours Degree:

4. Synthesise and apply complex theoretical perspectives and concepts to an extended piece of written work

Programme Structure

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).

American Studies

Level One will be offered at foundation level, presupposing no previous knowledge of American Studies, nor requiring it as an admission criterion. Modules will focus on introducing you to the concept of American Studies, and provide you with a basic knowledge of the USA's history and culture, within a global context. There is a dedicated foundation module (*American Foundations*), defining key American themes; mission, immigration, race, westward expansion, the American Dream, politics, freedom and the constitution. You will follow modules that explore America's impact upon, and standing within, the modern world; and the value of cultural evidence, in the form of cinema, as a tool for understanding the social history and key ideologies of the United States. Embedded within all the modules, and, especially in the foundation module, will be fundamental academic and transferable skills (essay writing and referencing); and they will also provide grounding in the inter-disciplinarity central to American Studies.

Level Two will build upon the foundations of Level One, with regard to content and skills, with modules exploring, in an inter-disciplinary context, critical aspects of American history and culture: the impact of depression, war and nuclear diplomacy; industrialisation and urban culture; slavery and race relations; popular culture and cinema, to name but a few. A work-based learning module will fulfil the University's commitment to the promotion of transferable skills, graduate-ness and career relevance. There is also an option to follow a one-semester exchange in the United States, where you take modules in the host institution approved by the Head of Programme; the module choice offers the opportunity for diversity, whilst still broadly mapping against the structure of the home programme, and generally enhancing your experience.

Level Three will offer you advanced level modules, with specific focus, reflecting the research and teaching expertise of the existing programme team; and which will promote the complexity and sophistication, with regard to knowledge, skills and inter-disciplinary understanding, expected of a final year degree student in American Studies. A key aspect will be the Special Study, a supervised independent research project on a topic relevant to American Studies, representing the culmination of academic skills development; it may be taken either as a twenty or forty-credit module, providing you with the opportunity to tilt the emphasis of your programme more, or less, towards independent research. Modules, more narrowly defined than at previous levels, address, for example, the social and cultural ferment of 1960s/70s USA; the American Civil War and its heritage; the politics, strategy and culture of the Vietnam War; the Anglo-American 'special relationship'; contemporary popular culture and American literature. Transferable, as well as advanced academic, skills are embedded within all modules, thus preparing you for the world of employment or postgraduate study.

Modules for the Programme

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Status of Module*
1HI500	1	1	War and Society	20	O
1HI504	1	1	Making and Britain	20	O
1AS200	1	1	American Foundation	20	C
1HI503	1	1	Researching and Presenting the Past	20	C
1AS202	1	2	Cinema and Society	20	C
1AS201	1	2	America's Century	20	C
1HI502	1	2	Empires	20	O
1HI505	1	2	The Visible Past	20	O
1HI501	1	2	Contemporary Crisis	20	O
1HI506	1	2	Popular Protest	20	O
2EN602	2	1	Mapping America	20	C
2HI512	2	1	The World After Rome	20	O
2HI505	2	1	The Age of Revolution c1780-1830	20	O
2HI501	2	1	Flowering of the Middle Ages	20	O
2HI503	2	1	Reds! The Rise and Fall of Soviet Communism	20	O
2HI507	2	1	History, Film and Television	20	O
2HI509	2	1	The Making of Modern America	20	O
2HI508	2	1	International Organisation in the 20 th Century	20	O
2FS101	2	1	Film and the American Imagination	20	O
2AS200	2	1	Blues and Roots	20	O
2HI502	2	2	History: Community and Culture	20	C
2HI504	2	2	The Age of Anxiety	20	O
2AS201	2	2	From Slavery to Freedom	20	O
2HI506	2	2	Sleeping Dragon	20	O
2CW101	2	2	Writing Reality: Creative Non-Fiction	20	O
2HI510	2	2	The Plague, Piety and Power	20	O
2HI500	2	2	Europe in the Age of Nationalism 1848-1914	20	O
2HI511	2	2	The Power of the Past in Early Modern Britain	20	O
3HI506	3	1&2	History and American Studies: Special Study	20	CA if taken ¹
3HI507	3	1&2	History and American Studies: Special Studies	40	CA if taken ¹
3HI505	3	1	Early Victorian History	20	O
3HI504	3	1	US Conflicts on East Asian Midlands	20	O
3HI515	3	1	The Wars of the Roses	20	O
3HI508	3	1	The Atlantic World in the Eighteenth Century	20	O
3HI516	3	1	The Empire Strikes Back: Mikhail Gorbachev and the Collapse of the Soviet Union	20	O
3HI517	3	1	The English Revolution	20	O
3AS202	3	1	The Special Relationship	20	O
3AS200	3	1	Cinema of Conflict	20	O
3AS203	3	2	The Nation Divided	20	O
3HI500	3	2	The Great Society	20	O
3HI503	3	2	Origins of the Second World War	20	O

¹ Compulsory if taken modules indicate that students are given an option of compulsory modules. This may be an option between two dissertation/special study modules, or a choice between core skills modules where the student is enrolled in joint honours and can take, for example, the employability module from either programme.

3HI512	3	2	Late Anglo-Saxon England	20	O
3HI509	3	2	From British Empire to Commonwealth Nations	20	O
3HI514	3	2	Republic in Danger: France in the World	20	O
3HI502	3	2	The First Crusade	20	O
3HI501	3	2	Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain	20	O
3HI518	3	2	Doomed Youth	20	O
3EN280	3	2	American Literature in the Twentieth Century	20	O
3AS201	3	2	Pop Americana	20	O

***C**: Compulsory, **CP**: Compulsory for progression to the next level, **CA**: Compulsory for award, **O**: option or **E**: elective.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

History

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.

American Studies

American Studies level one modules are adapted to the Supported Open Learning format, providing 36 hours class contact time per 20 credit module, together with appropriate tutorial support; supported open learning strategies range from Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) support to independent group work.

Level two modules build on the foundation established at Level 1 by enabling you to further apply ideas and concepts. Modules will also deepen your knowledge and understand of the context of American Studies. Assessment continues to be based on a combination of coursework essays, reviews and essays/exams to allow you to build upon those skills established at level 1.

You will engage in a greater level of analytical thinking and will be encouraged to embark upon, plan and execute work more autonomously and to take increasing responsibility for the process of your own learning.

Level three modules enable you to take a higher degree of responsibility for the planning, direction and management of your own learning. You will be required to work with an enhanced degree of autonomy and independence.

The essay, essay/exam approach, together with the dissertation, is utilised to further your ability to develop and refine your skills.

Level 1 Assessment Strategies

STRATEGY	MODULE
Assignment and research project	1HI501/1HI502/1HI506/1HI504
Essays + timed assessment	1AS201/1HI500
Portfolio	1HI503/1HI505/1AS200
Essays + timed assessment	1AS201
Critical film reviews	1AS202

Level 2 Assessment Strategies

STRATEGY	MODULE
Film Review	2HI507
Research Essay	2HI507
Essay + timed assessment	2HI500/2HI501/2AS201/ 2HI508/2HI510/2HI503/ 2HI504/2HI509
Two essays	2HI505/2HI511/2HI506/ 2HI512/2HI513
Portfolio	2HI502/2CW101
Essay + film project	2FS101
Portfolio	2EN602
Essay + research project	2AS200

Level 3 Assessment Strategies

STRATEGY	MODULE
Essay and timed assessment	3HI508/3HI504/3HI505/3HI 509/3HI500/3HI517/3HI516/ 3HI512/3HI501/3HI503/3HI 514/3HI502/3AS203/3HI515 /3AS202
Documentary exercise	3HI512
Research paper	3AS200
Essay + essay	3EN280
Essays + review	3AS201
Dissertation	3HI506/3HI507

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](#).

In addition, the following programme-specific regulations apply in respect of progression and graduation:

Joint honours students will have the choice to take a 20 or 40 credit special study, listed below and may also take the equivalent special study/dissertation module in the other half of their pairing to achieve honours.

- 3HI507 *Special Study* (40 credits)
- 3HI506 *Special Study* (20 credits)

Internal and External Reference Points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University Mission Statement](#)
- [Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy](#)
- [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 (faculty)
- Module handbooks (faculty)

Date written / revised: 28/04/16 QSC PASP

3HI513 removed as part of annual module archiving.