

Programme Specification (Joint Honours)

Award and title: BA (Hons) War Studies and History

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| <i>School:</i> | Humanities |
| <i>Subject area:</i> | War Studies History |
| <i>Entry from academic year:</i> | 2025-26 |
| <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) War Studies and History Diploma of Higher Education War Studies and History Certificate of Higher Education War Studies and History |
| <i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i> | TBC |
| <i>Joint Honours combinations:</i> | War Studies and History American Studies and War Studies |
| <i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i> | Politics and International Relations History |
| <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 |

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 you to have a significant amount of choice and flexibility in relation to your learning experience. In addition, Joint Honours will engage you in a range of learning and teaching experiences and assessment opportunities.

War Studies

Our War Studies programme offers you a range of theoretical approaches to war, including historical, political, international, sociological and philosophical. We provide you with a sophisticated understanding of war and global relations, both as subjects worthy of study and as intellectual preparation for a variety of career trajectories. Our research and teaching areas range from Ancient Rome to the Napoleonic Wars to the Cold War and the War on Terror.

Although there were some indications in the 1990s that organised human conflict was declining and the world was increasingly peaceful, there has in fact rarely been a time when the world has been at peace, and the evidence is that in the twenty-first century the incidence of warfare is again increasing. Our War Studies programme explores this depressingly consistent phenomenon, but it is not military history –

¹ The standard period of study will apply unless otherwise stated

though it may contain some. Nor is it, we would contend, peace studies, with which it shares many characteristics, but which normally has a wider remit including social violence and a more applied aspect. Put simply, War Studies is, as the name suggests, the study of war. But it is also much more than that. War Studies asks fundamental questions such as what is war, how do wars start, and how do they end? What are the laws of war, what are the morals and ethics of war – if indeed there are any - and is there such a thing as a 'just' war? How has war changed over time and how can wars be prevented? As Trotsky said, 'War is the locomotive of history' and so War Studies is also concerned with the accelerated social transformations that war brings in its wake, such as modernisation and mechanisation, social and cultural shifts, and multicultural and multinational revolutions.

Special features

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

- We offer modules and specialisms which focus on the causes, nature and consequences of warfare from a broad disciplinary perspective.
- We have a team of dedicated staff, who have an exceptional record of providing support to students.
- 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.
- The programme also makes use of local expertise and resources from the heritage industry such as the Yorkshire Air Museum; the York Cold War Bunker; the Kohima Museum at Imphal Barracks, York; and the York Army Museum; the Yorkshire Film Archive; and war veterans living in the local area. Some field trips may involve a cost to students.

History

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 Levels 5 and 6 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.

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, *Experiential Learning for War Studies* (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 students are encouraged to reflect self-critically on their performance and to prepare themselves for their future careers 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, 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 work closely with a personal academic tutor.

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.yorksj.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 structure

| Code | Level | Semester | Title | Credits | Module status | |
|---|-------|----------|---|---------|--------------------------------|---|
| | | | | | Compulsory (C) or optional (O) | non-compensatable (NC) or compensatable (X) |
| WAR4004M | 4 | 1 | Introduction to War Studies | 20 | C | X |
| HIS4008M | 4 | 1 | Researching and Presenting the Past | 20 | C | X |
| HIS4010M | 4 | 1 | War and Society | 20 | C | X |
| WAR4006M | 4 | 2 | Why Wars Begin | 20 | C | X |
| WAR4005M | 4 | 2 | War and the Media | 20 | C | X |
| HIS4015M | 4 | 2 | A Century in Crisis | 20 | C | X |
| WAR5004M | 5 | 1 or 2 | War in the West, 1940-45 | 20 | C | X |
| WAR5005M | 5 | 1 | Experiential Learning for War Studies | 20 | C | X |
| You must select FOUR option modules, ensuring 60 credits in each subject overall | | | | | | |
| HIS5002M | 5 | 2 | Making History | 20 | O | X |
| HIS5003M | 5 | 1 or 2 | Pageantry, Power and Patriotism: Late Medieval England, 1300-1450 | 20 | O | X |
| AMS5003M | 5 | 1 or 2 | The Nation Divided: America in the Era of the Civil War | 20 | O | X |
| AMS5006M | 5 | 1 or 2 | The United States since 9/11 | 20 | O | X |

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| 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 |
| WAR5001M | 5 | 1 or 2 | Peace Organisations | 20 | O | X |
| WAR5002M | 5 | 1 or 2 | The Face of Battle | 20 | O | X |
| LIT5005M | 5 | 2 | Conflicting Words | 20 | O | X |
| | | | | | | |
| WAR6003M | 6 | 1 or 2 | The American Way of War | 20 | C | X |
| You must choose either HIS6001M or WAR6004M | | | | | | |
| HIS6001M | 6 | 1 & 2 | Dissertation in History | 40 | O | NC |
| WAR6004M | 6 | 1 & 2 | Dissertation in War Studies | 40 | O | NC |
| In addition to the 40 credit Dissertation module, you must choose 40 credits in each subject | | | | | | |
| WAR6001M | 6 | 1 or 2 | Special Subject in Military History | 20 | O | X |
| WAR6007M | 6 | 1 or 2 | Special Subject in Modern International History | 20 | O | X |
| 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 |
| WAR6002M | 6 | 1 or 2 | Special Subject in War Studies | 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 |

*The dissertation can be taken in either subject.

You must take 60 credits in each of your subjects at Levels 4 and 5. At Level 6, you must take 40 credits in each subject and a 40 credit Dissertation module.

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-compensatable. A non-compensatable module is one that must be passed at the relevant level (with a mark of 40 in order to progress).

War Studies

Programme aim(s)

The specific aims of the War Studies programme are:

- To foster a lasting interest in, and enjoyment of, War Studies;
- To introduce you to a range of approaches to the study of war and peace;
- To encourage you to explore the implications and applications of your academic study in the wider society to which you belong and a diverse employment market.

Programme learning outcomes

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

Level 4

- 4.1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of approaches to the study of war.
- 4.2 Interpret a range of primary and secondary sources to form a scholarly argument.
- 4.3 Identify the value and limitations of competing sources of information.
- 4.4 Show a basic proficiency in study skills relevant to the study of warfare.

Level 5

- 5.1 Apply knowledge and understanding of a range of particular themes relating to the nature and significance of warfare as a human activity over time.
- 5.2 Compose a coherent and critically structured argument, using an expanded range of primary and secondary material.
- 5.3 Apply a variety of concepts, theories and methods from a range of disciplines to the analysis of the phenomenon of warfare.
- 5.4 Effectively demonstrate an ability to effectively employ communication and research skills and demonstrate a capacity for independent study.

Level 6

- 6.1 Show a systematic understanding of specific issues and problems relating to the nature and significance of warfare as a human activity over time.
- 6.2 Critically evaluate the development of war studies as a discipline and the relevance of scholarly debate in a specialised context.
- 6.3 Demonstrate an in-depth knowledge, understanding, and analysis of a specific topic or theme related to the phenomenon of warfare.
- 6.4 Make use of necessary skills for employment or future study, such as manage your own learning and research, taking the initiative, constructing an argument, and demonstrating communication skills.

Learning, teaching and assessment

Teaching & Learning

The BA War Studies programme's teaching and learning methods are designed to foster your knowledge of and enthusiasm for the investigation of the phenomenon of war, stimulate your engagement with and ownership of the learning process; encourage in depth analysis; reinforce critical thinking skills; encourage you to reflect on and take responsibility for your own learning;

and take proactive account of your particular circumstances and needs to ensure your maximum participation.

During the course of your programme you will deepen your knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon of war and develop the skills and qualities which will equip you for graduate employment, postgraduate study and lifelong learning. You will encounter a balance of different learning and teaching strategies, modes of analysis, types of sources and modes of assessment in order to explore the phenomenon of warfare from as many different perspectives as possible and to explore and test a broad expanse of subject knowledge and a wide range of competencies and skills. This approach also serves to foster your intellectual agility, while providing the variety and varying tempo to maintain your interest and engagement. Teaching in the classroom is supported by open learning and independent study, which are integrated within programme modules.

You will encounter an increasing variety of teaching forms and methods as you proceed through the programme from Level 4 through Levels 5 and 6 where the programme becomes increasingly specialised with a view to developing your critical, reflective and research skills over time. You will be encouraged and assisted to develop your independent learning, and the promotion of increasingly independent research skills over the course of the programme will culminate with your completion of the dissertation in War Studies at Level 6. You will be supported in your summative assessments through formative activities such as peer review of draft assessments plans, class discussion about the demands of a particular assessment, and 'feedforward' comments on summative work, which make suggestions for how to improve future assessments, that can be further explained to you in tutorials.

Assessment

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

You will receive regular constructive feedback during the course of your programme to help you evaluate your progress and identify how you can improve further, with particular attention being paid to building the skills of self-reflection and self-criticality. The feedback process is integrated with the tutorial system. You can discuss any aspect of your modules or programme with your tutors in contact sessions and by email, and you can seek formal tutorials. You will receive written feedback for all assessed work via the VLE within three weeks of your submission of the assignment. Feedback and tutorials have a formative 'feed forward' role which involves you in a dialogue with your tutors.

History

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 their academic study in the wider society to which they belong.
- To enable you to compete successfully in a diverse employment market, 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

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

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.

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 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 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. *Experiential Learning for War Studies* 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-compensatable.

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](#)

Date written / revised: 28 January 2020

Programme originally approved: