

Programme Specification

Award and title: BA (Hons) History and Religion

<i>School:</i>	Humanities
<i>Subject area:</i>	Religion History
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2026-27
<i>in the month(s) of</i>	September
<i>Awarding institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Delivery location:</i>	York St John University
<i>Programme/s accredited by:</i>	
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Certificate of Higher Education History and Religion Diploma of Higher Education History and Religion BA (Ord) History and Religion
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	Religion and History
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	Theology and Religious Studies 2019 History
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Full time for three years Part time for six years
<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.

Religion has historically shaped and influenced the lives of individuals and societies politically and culturally. Today religion is more relevant than ever, so we believe that an understanding of religion is central to understanding what is happening in the world. Accordingly, the distinctive features of this programme arise from the clear relationship between the study of religion, theology, and issues in contemporary society. Modules cover the connections between religion and controversial issues in modern life, such as the gap between wealth and poverty; the relationships between races and genders; sexuality; equal opportunities; the influence of the media; the role of ethics in life and death decisions; religion and

politics; religious communities living as minorities, theological responses to environmental issues, religion and sustainability, whether war is a viable and moral option; religion and genocide. You will also learn about foundational philosophical and theological thinkers and historical events that underpin global societies. Additionally, you will be able to explore how aspects of religion and theology manifest in contemporary culture through visual culture, film and literature as well as expressing your own ideas through artwork, posters, and creative writing.

This programme will equip you to think in an attentive, critical and rigorous manner, to investigate a diverse range of beliefs with curiosity and respect, and to articulate your own views clearly, confidently and effectively. As well as having their own intrinsic worth, these abilities will also prepare you well for working in a range of occupations. Students completing the programme will take with them generic transferable skills such as: research competence; analytical clarity; effective written and oral communication; self-management; teamwork; effective use of IT.

The Religion degrees have a range of special features:

- Annual away days in each year of the programme help to develop academic skills and foster a sense of community (at the university's expense, non-staff budget permitting).
- Many modules include trips to relevant sites, like convents, mosques, galleries or local archives (at the university's expense, non-staff budget permitting).
- Optional research modules in the final year allow students to focus on their own areas of interest.
- The programme includes focus on career and the development of work-related skills. A compulsory second-year module includes a work-placement and support from the careers service.
- Members of the staff team are closely connected to the prestigious Ebor Lectures, hosted by York Minister, where prominent public intellectuals give lectures on topics like science and religion, global justice, immigration or austerity.
- You will be taught by members of the staff team who are active researchers in exciting, contemporary issues, and who have published articles and books in a range of topics, including: religion and gender; peace-building and reconciliation; public theology and global justice; the problem of evil; psychology and religion.
- The opportunity to study abroad for a semester during the second year.

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 you have a choice of topics and periods of study in L5 and L6, 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, *History, Community and Culture* (although if you do the study abroad programme in semester 1, you will have an equivalent experience as part of the *Making History* module).

- We have a team of dedicated staff, who have an exceptional record of providing support to students (reflected in consecutive high scores in the support categories of the NSS).
- There is an optional exchange, which involves students studying for one semester (usually in the first half of the second year) at a university elsewhere in Europe or North America.
- At all levels of the programme key skills are fully integrated into academic study and 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, monasteries or castles as well as explore the history on their doorstep in York. Some field trips may involve a cost to students.
- You will belong to a community of dedicated historians, with the opportunity for celebratory moments, and 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.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 structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					compulsory or optional to take C or O	Non-compensable or compensable NC or X
REL4017M	4	1	Studying Religion	20	C	NC
HIS4008M	4	1	Researching and Presenting the Past	20	C	X
HIS4009M	4	1	Global York: A Social and Cultural History of the City	20	C	X
REL4020M	4	2	Religion Peace and Conflict	20	C	X
REL4018M	4	2	Values and Virtues	20	C	X
AMS4007M	4	2	The United States: Empire of Liberty?	20	C	X

*Work-related learning: you must select one of the employability modules, either REL5031M or HIS5001M (and cannot do both)						
REL5031M	5	1 or 2	Work Related Learning: Religion	20	C*	NC
HIS5001M	5	1	History, Community and Culture	20	C*	NC
You must select FIVE optional modules, ensuring you have 60 credits in each subject overall						
REL5024M	5	1 or 2	From Descartes to the Death of God	20	O	X
REL5025M	5	1 or 2	Matters of Life and Death	20	O	X
REL5026M	5	1 or 2	Problems of Evil	20	O	X
REL5027M	5	1 or 2	Religion and Literature	20	O	X
REL5028M	5	1 or 2	Religion and Politics	20	O	X
REL5029M	5	1 or 2	Religious Mapping	20	O	X
REL5032M	5	1 or 2	Sociology of Religion	20	O	X
REL5030M	5	1 or 2	Theology and the Environment	20	O	X
HIS5002M	5	2	Making History	20	O	X
HIS5015M	5	1 or 2	Tyranny and Majesty: Kingship in Late Medieval England, c.1300-1450	20	O	X
HIS5004M	5	1 or 2	Watchers and the Watched: Society in Early Modern England, c. 1540-1670	20	O	X
HIS5005M	5	1 or 2	Tudor Women: Agency and Authority	20	O	X
HIS5006M	5	1 or 2	Reds! The Rise and Fall of Soviet Communism	20	O	X
HIS5007M	5	1 or 2	Victorian Grubs: Food, Science and Society	20	O	X
AMS5002M	5	1 or 2	Slavery to Freedom	20	O	X
AMS5006M	5	1 or 2	The United States since 9/11	20	O	X
HIS5013M	5	1 or 2	The Republic in Danger	20	O	X
HIS5008M	5	1 or 2	A United Kingdom? Britain, 1707-1837	20	O	X
AMS5003M	5	1 or 2	The Nation Divided: America in the era of the Civil War	20	O	X
HIS5009M	5	1 or 2	The Great Society: America in the 1960s	20	O	X
HIS5010M	5	1 or 2	Mao's China: From Empire to Communism	20	O	X
HIS5011M	5	1 or 2	The Roman Empire: Tiberius to Domitian (14-96)	20	O	X
HIS5012M	5	1 or 2	Historical Specialisms	20	O	X
You must select one Dissertation module						
If you choose a 40 credit Dissertation you must choose a further 40 credits in each subject						
If you choose the 20 credit Dissertation, you must ensure you have 60 credits in each subject overall						
*Dissertation: you must choose one of the dissertation modules either REL6026M, REL6034M or HIS6001M (and cannot do more than one)						

REL6026M	6	1 & 2	Long Dissertation (Religion)	40	C*	NC
REL6034M	6	1	Short Dissertation (Religion)	20	C*	NC
HIS6001M	6	1 & 2	Dissertation in History	40	C*	NC
REL6023M	6	1 or 2	Great Philosophical Texts	20	O	X
REL6024M	6	1 or 2	Feminist Ethics and Religion	20	O	X
REL6025M	6	1 or 2	Theology and Ethics Through Film	20	O	X
REL6027M/ REL6028M	6	1 or 2	Negotiated Study	20	O	X
REL6035M	6	1 or 2	Religion and Genocides	20	O	X
REL6029M	6	1 or 2	Spirituality and Public Life	20	O	X
REL6030M	6	1 or 2	Religion and Globalisation	20	O	X
REL6031M	6	1 or 2	Religion and Myth	20	O	X
REL6033M	6	1 or 2	Religion and Visual Culture	20	O	X
REL6032M	6	1 or 2	Religion in the Public Sphere	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

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 (with a mark of 40 or above) in order to progress.

Religion Programme aim(s)

The aims of the Religion programmes are to:

1. Encourage students to develop a sophisticated understanding of religious traditions across the world, as well as the complex role they play in philosophical, ethical and political discourses;
2. Inspire students to pursue their own philosophical and/or theological questions in a lively, informed and disciplined way, based on self-directed research and respectful learning from and about others' perspectives;
3. To cultivate a community of learning that encourages open, rational discussion, and which promotes qualities of respect, ethical sensitivity, social responsibility, and global awareness.

Programme learning outcomes

Level 4

Upon successful completion of level 4 students will be able to:

- 4.1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key figures, sources or texts relevant to the study of religion (e.g. Thomas Aquinas; the Talmud; Emile Durkeim)
- 4.2 Identify and explain central themes, concepts and debates relevant to religion (e.g. the nature of religion; arguments for the existence of God; key theoretical approaches used in the study of religion) using primary and secondary sources.
- 4.3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, institutions and practices, showing awareness of their wider social and cultural contexts.
- 4.4 Present arguments to support their own views, whilst representing the beliefs and arguments of others fairly and accurately, demonstrating sensitivity and respect.
- 4.5 Communicate with clarity and precision of expression, whilst adhering to academic conventions and demonstrating a basic proficiency in essential study skills relevant to the subject area.

Level 5

Upon successful completion of level 5 students will be able to:

- 5.1 Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of key figures, sources or texts relevant to religion;
- 5.2 Analyse central themes, concepts and debates relevant to a range of contexts within religion (e.g. climate change; globalisation; the ethics of film) whilst making critical use of primary and secondary sources;
- 5.3 Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of religious beliefs, institutions and practices, showing detailed awareness of their wider social and cultural contexts.
- 5.4 Compose coherent and effectively structured arguments, whilst representing the beliefs and arguments of others fairly and accurately, demonstrating sensitivity and respect;
- 5.5 Communicate with clarity and precision of expression, whilst adhering to academic conventions and demonstrating competence in a range of study skills relevant to the subject area.
- 5.6 Work collaboratively through fieldwork and placement experiences to demonstrate the development of skills in preparation for the workplace, (e.g. dialogue, encounter and observation) and generic skill building (e.g. teamwork, problem-solving and communication)

Level 6

Upon successful completion of level 6 students will be able to:

- 6.1 Demonstrate detailed knowledge and systematic understanding of selected figures, sources or texts relevant to religion informed by recent scholarship at the forefront of relevant fields
- 6.2 Critically evaluate scholarly interventions in range of discussions relevant to religion whilst making effective critical use of a wide range of primary and secondary sources;

- 6.3 Critically apply detailed knowledge and systematic understanding of religious traditions to a range of discussions within the contemporary understanding of religion, showing sensitivity to their social, political and global contexts.
- 6.4 Construct rationally persuasive, balanced arguments within religion drawing critically on independently gathered primary and secondary sources, and in dialogue with other disciplines as appropriate (e.g. politics, social theory, peace studies).
- 6.5 Communicate complex material with clarity and precision of expression, whilst adhering to academic conventions and demonstrating effective use of a range of study skills relevant to the subject area.
- 6.6 Design and undertake a piece of extended independent research that demonstrates an in-depth knowledge, understanding and analysis of a specialised area within religion, philosophy and ethics.

Learning, teaching and assessment

The Religion team aims to provide you with a stimulating and supportive environment in which you can achieve your potential during your degree. Academic support is provided in a range of ways. Module tutors will be available to consult with you regarding particular topics or pieces of assessed work. You will also be assigned a personal/academic* tutor, who will meet with you throughout your degree to discuss your progress, to respond to any concerns you may have, and point you in the direction of more specialised support if necessary. Academic staff are all experts in their fields, and work hard to ensure that your lectures and seminars are clear, accessible, lively and thought-provoking. We also encourage our students to challenge, inspire and support each other as they learn. At some point in each year you will take part in an away-day/writing retreat with the whole year group, which aims to develop and strengthen the sense of community within the group, and gives opportunities for learning in a different environment.

Modules of study are based on a number of different forms of learning, including: formal class contact (lectures, seminars or workshops); group activity (e.g. discussions, preparing presentations or posters); independent study (reading, note-taking, research, preparing assignments). You will be given opportunities to actively participate in the teaching sessions and to develop your confidence through learning activities such as group discussion and presentations. This will enable you to develop both independence and collaborative skills as you learn both with and from your peers. Your tutor will guide you in preparing for these activities. In addition, there are also additional trips attached to some modules (for example, to local sites of religious significance), and a work placement that forms part of our 'work-related learning' module. Throughout your degree you will be given 'formative' opportunities to practice the skills needed in your assessment (for example, constructing an argument, or researching a new topic). This means that you will be continually reflecting on your progress, and working with tutors as you improve your academic skills

Your degree will be based on a variety of forms of assessment, ranging from traditional essays to posters, commentaries, presentations and portfolios. This will ensure that you develop a range of skills that will be valuable to you as you prepare to leave university: research competence; argumentative skill; communicative clarity; cultural sensitivity, etc. At the same time, we ensure that you are given chances to develop and hone your abilities through repeated efforts at the same kind of task. In your final year you will refine these skills as you write your dissertation, which offers you the chance to independently research a topic of your own choice, whilst supervised by an expert in your area of study.

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

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. *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 dissertation at level 6 meets the requirement for an extended piece of written work based on research and primary source material and is assessed on the basis of 10,000 words for 40 credits.

Progression and graduation requirements

The University's [general regulations](#) for undergraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section as non-compensable.

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University mission and values](#)
- [University 2026 Strategy](#)
- [QAA subject benchmark statements 2019](#)
- [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](#)

Date written / revised:

Programme originally approved: