

Programme Specification

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

<i>School:</i>	Humanities
<i>Subject area:</i>	History
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2027-28
<i>in the month(s) of</i>	September
<i>Awarding institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Delivery location:</i>	York St John University
<i>Programme/s accredited by:</i>	N/A
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Certificate of Higher Education War Studies and History Diploma of Higher Education War Studies and History BA (Ord) War Studies and History
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	L2K4
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	War Studies and History
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	History (2022) Politics and International Relations (2023)
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Undergraduate periods of study ¹ for full time / part time
<i>Language of study:</i>	English
<i>Paired with Foundation Year</i>	Yes
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	Yes
<i>Opt-in YSJU Placement Year opportunity:</i>	Yes
<i>Excluding a year-long placement/professional experience, are there placement/field trip/work experience(s) totalling 20 days or more?</i>	No

Introduction and special features

BA (Hons) War Studies and History at York St John University introduces you to the study of conflict and power within their historical contexts. You will explore how warfare has influenced political structures, social systems, and technological and strategic innovations across different periods and regions.

As a Joint Honours degree, War Studies and History brings together two complementary disciplines. War Studies offers an interdisciplinary approach to understanding the causes, conduct, and consequences of war, drawing on political thought, ethics, strategy, and international relations. History broadens out this perspective by situating conflict within the wider developments of human society, including political change, social evolution, and cultural transformation, from the early medieval period to the present day.

Throughout the programme, you will develop a deep and critical understanding of conflict in both past and contemporary settings. In War Studies your studies will encompass political leadership, military strategy,

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

diplomacy, ideology, intelligence, social change, and cultural memory, engaging with the experiences of states, organisations, and individuals affected by violence. In History modules, you will have opportunities to study a wide range of varied histories from the early medieval period to modern era. These offer their own diverse fields of investigation, both supporting your study of war and extending beyond.

Distinctive features

- Through a progressive sequence of War Studies modules, you will explore conflict from political, historical, ethical, and global perspectives while History modules will take you into diverse areas of the past from across the globe.
- You will build a set of interdisciplinary skills important to the study of history and war, from introductory study in first year to independent research in third year.
- The programme draws on local expertise and heritage resources, including, among others, the Yorkshire Air Museum and York Army Museum.
- You will engage in Work-Related Experiential Learning at each year of study, through placements, collaboration with external partners, and applied projects, giving you valuable experience for your career or further study.
- You can expand your horizons through the opportunity to study abroad in North America during your second year.
- You will join a supportive and inclusive learning community and be taught by active researchers whose work informs the curriculum.

Across all years of study on BA (Hons) War Studies and History, you will develop as a critical thinker, researcher and communicator, able to engage confidently with complex historical and contemporary issues. By the end of your degree, you will have the knowledge, analytical skills and intellectual perspective that can be applied in a variety of academic and professional settings.

Admissions criteria

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

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

If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Recognition of prior learning \(RPL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aim(s)

The BA (Hons) War Studies and History aims to:

1. Develop your understanding of the nature, causes, conduct and consequences of war through a broad, interdisciplinary approach.
2. Explore how conflict shapes societies and how historical contexts influence the nature and conduct of war
3. Equip you with the intellectual, analytical and communication skills needed for academic success and for a wide range of professional contexts.
4. Foster your ability to work independently and collaboratively, demonstrating York St John's Graduate Attributes of confidence, authenticity, resilience, enterprise and professionalism.
5. Support your engagement with applied, public-facing and work-related learning across all years of the programme.

Programme learning outcomes

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

History

Level 4

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

Level 5

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

Level 6

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

War Studies

Level 4

- 4.1 Demonstrate understanding of a range of approaches, frameworks, and methods used in the study of war and conflict.
- 4.2 Interpret a range of primary and secondary sources to construct evidence-based arguments about warfare.
- 4.3 Identify the values and limitations of different kinds of military, political, and cultural evidence relating to war.
- 4.4 Apply core academic and study skills relevant to the study of warfare.
- 4.5 Demonstrate awareness of how ideas about war and peace are shaped by cultural, political, and global contexts.
- 4.6 Recognise how transferable skills in War Studies are relevant to both academic and professional settings.

Level 5

- 5.1 Apply knowledge of a range of historical and contemporary themes relating to the nature, conduct, and consequences of warfare as a human activity over time.
- 5.2 Construct coherent and persuasive arguments using a diverse body of primary and secondary sources, engaging with competing interpretations.
- 5.3 Apply interdisciplinary theories and methods from history, politics, sociology, and ethics, to the study of war and conflict.
- 5.4 Demonstrate independence, initiative, and critical thinking in research, writing, and communication.
- 5.5 Demonstrate understanding of how study of war enhances understanding of global dynamics of peace, security, and international cooperation.
- 5.6 Apply insights from War Studies to practical, professional, or community contexts.

Level 6

- 6.1 Demonstrate an advanced understanding of specialised topics, theories, and debates within War Studies.
- 6.2 Use advanced skills in analysing and interpreting interdisciplinary primary and secondary materials.
- 6.3 Critically evaluate the development of War Studies as a discipline, situating it within broader historiographical contexts.
- 6.4 Construct coherent and well-evidenced arguments that show close engagement with scholarly debates in War Studies.
- 6.5 Critically reflect on how the study of war contributes to understanding global issues such as peace, security, sustainability, and international relations.
- 6.6 Evaluate and apply transferable and professional skills, including communication, problem-solving, and self-management, with initiative and independence.
- 6.7 Design and undertake an extended independent research project that demonstrates in-depth knowledge and analytical understanding of a specific aspect of war and conflict.

Programme structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					Compulsory (C) or optional (O)	non-compensable (NC) or compensable (X)
WAR4007M	4	1	Introduction to War Studies	20	C	X
HIS4019M	4	1	War and Society	20	C	X
HIS4017M	4	1	Researching and Presenting the Past	20	C	X
WAR4008M	4	2	War and the Media	20	C	X
WAR4009M	4	2	Why Wars Begin	20	C	X
HIS4022M	4	2	World in Crisis	20	C	X
WAR5008M	5	1 or 2	Battle	20	C	X
WAR5009M	5	1 or 2	Virtual Battlefields: Conflict Simulation and Modelling	20	C	X
WAR5010M	5	1 or 2	Cutting Edge: Current Developments in Warfare and International Security	20	C	X
You must select three HIS-coded modules from the options below						
HIS5016M	5	1 or 2	The Chinese Revolutions: From Empire to Communism	20	O	X
HIS5017M	5	1 or 2	European Conflict, c. 1660-1815	20	O	X
HIS5018M	5	1 or 2	From Slavery to Freedom: African American History and Culture	20	O	X
HIS5019M	5	1 or 2	Alfred the Great and the Idea of England	20	O	X
HIS5020M	5	1 or 2	Tyranny and Majesty: Kingship in Late Medieval England, 1300-1450	20	O	X
HIS5021M	5	1 or 2	'You've Never Had It So Good!' Britain 1945-1997	20	O	X
HIS5022M	5	1 or 2	Living and Dying in Revolutionary England, c. 1620 – c. 1670	20	O	X
HIS5023M	5	1 or 2	C'est La Vie! An Everyday History of Nineteenth-Century France	20	O	X
HIS5024M	5	1 or 2	Lives and Experiences of Sixteenth-Century Women	20	O	X
HIS5025M	5	1 or 2	The Great Society: America in the 1960s	20	O	X
HIS5026M	5	1 or 2	Russia between Lenin and Stalin, 1917-1953	20	O	X
HIS5027M	5	1 or 2	The United States since 9/11	20	O	X
HIS5028M	5	1 or 2	Making History	20	O	X
WAR6009M	6	1 or 2	The American Way of War	20	C	X
WAR6010M	6	1 or 2	Case Blue: Decision in the Southern USSR, 1942-43	20	C	X
You must choose either WAR6008M or HIS6014M						
WAR6008M	6	1 & 2	Dissertation in War Studies	40	C	NC
HIS6014M	6	1 & 2	Dissertation in History	40	C	NC
You must select two HIS-coded modules from the options below						
HIS6015M	6	1 or 2	Cold War, Hot War: The International History of the Korean War	20	O	X
HIS6016M	6	1 or 2	The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: secrets, spies and security and Historical Inquiry	20	O	X

HIS6017M	6	1 or 2	Doomed Youth: A Social and Cultural History of the First World War	20	O	X
HIS6018M	6	1 or 2	Life After Death in the Early Middle Ages: Saints, Ghosts, and Dynasties	20	O	X
HIS6019M	6	1 or 2	Roads to War: The International Origins of World War Two	20	O	X
HIS6020M	6	1 or 2	A Cultural History of the Reformation	20	O	X
HIS6021M	6	1 or 2	The Wars of the Roses	20	O	X
HIS6022M	6	1 or 2	Myth, Murder, Memory: Traumatic Histories and the American Experiences	20	O	X
HIS6023M	6	1 or 2	Napoleonic Europe	20	O	X
HIS6024M	6	1 or 2	Life Through Letters, c. 1780-1850	20	O	X
HIS6025M	6	1 or 2	Watchers and the Watched: Surveillance in Early Modern England	20	O	X
HIS6026M	6	1 or 2	War Without Fronts: The Wars in Indochina, 1946-1975	20	O	X

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

Learning, teaching and assessment

Teaching on BA (Hons) War Studies and History takes place through a combination of lectures, seminars, workshops, independent research, and site-based and experiential learning. Lectures introduce key debates, concepts, and case studies, while seminars and workshops allow you to discuss ideas, analyse sources, and develop arguments. Collaborative activities encourage you to work with others, share insights, and learn from different perspectives. Learning also takes place outside the classroom, making use of York's distinctive historical and military heritage. Digital platforms and research databases support your study and help you engage with contemporary research methods.

The programme follows a scaffolded approach to ensure success in your studies. First year focuses on building confidence in academic skills, including reading, writing, and analysis, alongside understanding the core methods of the War Studies and History disciplines. Year two encourages you to apply this growing expertise to more specialised themes in War Studies and History and engage more critically with scholarly debates. By year three, you will work with greater independence and develop your own voice through modules shaped by staff research and through completing an independent dissertation.

War Studies modules are structured to build progressively, ensuring that you develop a comprehensive understanding of the discipline from multiple perspectives. Foundational modules in first year that provide the fundamental skills for studying the discipline include *Introduction to War Studies*; *Why Wars Begin*; and *War and the Media*. In years two and three, and through thematic modules such as *Battle*; *Cutting Edge: Current Developments in Warfare and International Security*; and *The American Way of War* you will work in different, but complimentary, ways in acquiring a deeper understanding of war and conflict, from campaign history, strategic studies, to operations. History modules are offered in greater number, giving you the flexibility to focus on your core interests and explore areas you are most passionate about. York itself, moreover, serves as an extension of the classroom, with several modules offering opportunities for site visits in and around the city, and including to famous battle sites like Towton. All site visits carry no cost to students.

Assessments are varied and inclusive, reflecting the diverse methods underpinning the study of War Studies and History. You might complete essays, strategic or policy briefings, source analyses, podcasts, blog posts, open or closed examinations, reflective writing, research portfolios, and an 8,000-word dissertation in either discipline. This range of assessments will make you a flexible and adaptable learner and supports the professional transferable skills you will acquire throughout the programme, and especially in the year two, work-related learning, module *Virtual Battlefields: Conflict Simulation and Modelling*.

Work-Related Experiential Learning (WREL) is embedded across the programme. You can expect activities such as site and battlefield visits, guest sessions and workshops with external professionals, collaborative and applied projects, and opportunities to produce work for professional and public audiences. For example, you may engage in a war journalism assessment informed by professional expertise; analyse a battlefield through a site-based project; or take part in simulation and modelling activities that apply your knowledge of conflict to practical scenarios.

Through studying BA (Hons) War Studies and History, you will be part of a collaborative community where debate, curiosity, and independence are encouraged. By the end of your degree, you will have the analytical, communication and intellectual skills that can be applied in a wide range of both academic and professional contexts.

Progression and graduation requirements

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

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

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

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

Date written / revised: December 2025

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