About the course

Flexible qualifications

Our MA in Information Literacy gives you the knowledge, understanding and skills to succeed in an exciting and fast-moving field. We have a flexible approach to teaching and learning, so you can study part time or full time, and take the programme as a Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate as alternatives to the full MA. You can also choose to study individual modules, accumulating credits towards a qualification to be completed later.

We can tailor a course to suit you, whether you’re new to the field or an experienced professional looking to develop your career.

Essential skills

The course aims to develop specialist practitioners, who understand the theory and practice of information literacy, and who are qualified and motivated to educate members of the public in their lifelong development of information literacy skills.

It provides an in-depth understanding of information literacy and information behaviour in different contexts, as well as preparing participants for roles as information literacy teachers.

A world-class place to study

Our department has an international reputation for teaching and research. In every Research Assessment Exercise we’ve been awarded the highest possible rating. We’re the only Information Studies department in the country to achieve this.

That means that our teaching is based on the very latest ideas in the subject, and the way that we teach it is innovative and effective. It also means there are good opportunities to extend your study to PhD level if you wish.

www.sheffield.ac.uk/is

To find out more about the course, see pages 3–4. For details on how to apply, see page 11.
Information Literacy.

An exciting new field

Everyone needs to be information literate and this is increasingly recognised internationally. A Unesco meeting of international experts identified that Information Literacy

‘encompasses knowledge of one’s information concerns and needs, and the ability to identify, locate, evaluate, organise and effectively create, use and communicate information to address issues or problems at hand; it is a prerequisite for participating effectively in the Information Society, and is part of the basic human right of life long learning’.

Employers need people who can provide education in Information Literacy

There is a demand for practitioners who understand the theory and practice of information literacy and the different approaches that can be used to develop information literacy. Employers need effective teachers, people with confidence in using information and learning technologies, who can support and enhance learning in formal and informal settings – including schools, further and higher education, the workplace and public. This MA can give you the knowledge and skills needed to make a difference in this vitally important area.

Find out what some of our graduates are doing now on page 12.
Course structure: three levels of qualification

Whatever your career stage, your course will be made up of core (compulsory) and optional modules.

**MA Programme**
You’ll take modules worth a total of 180 credits. The core and dissertation modules are compulsory. You then choose modules from the list of options to make up the rest of your credits.

**Core modules (150 credits):**
- Dissertation (45 credits)
- Education for Information Literacy (30 credits)
- Educational Informatics (15 credits)
- Information Literacy Research (15 credits)
- Information Resources and Information Literacy (15 credits)
- Information Retrieval: Search Engines and Digital Libraries (15 credits)
- Research Methods and Dissertation Preparation (15 credits)

**Then choose 30 credits from the following:**
- Academic and Research Libraries (15 credits)
- Archive Use and Methodology (30 credits)
- Business Intelligence (15 credits)
- Content Management Systems (15 credits)
- E-Business and E-Commerce (15 credits)
- E-Government Information (15 credits)
- Electronic Publishing (15 credits)
- Healthcare Information (15 credits)
- Human Computer Interaction and User Interface Design (15 credits)
- Information Storage and Retrieval Research (15 credits)
- Library Services for Children and Young People (15 credits)
- Public Libraries (15 credits)

**With an optional non-credit rated module:**
- Practical Computing (0 credits, autumn)
Information Literacy.

PG Diploma (PGDip)
You'll take modules worth a total of 120 credits. The core modules are compulsory. You then choose modules from the list of options to make up the rest of your credits.

Core modules (90 credits):
Education for Information Literacy (30 credits)
Educational Informatics (15 credits)
Information Literacy Research (15 credits)
Information Resources and Information Literacy (15 credits)
Information Retrieval: Search Engines and Digital Libraries (15 credits)

Then choose 30 credits from the following:
Academic and Research Libraries (15 credits)
Archive Use and Methodology (30 credits)
Business Intelligence (15 credits)
Content Management Systems (15 credits)
E-Business and E-Commerce (15 credits)
E-Government Information (15 credits)
Electronic Publishing (15 credits)
Healthcare Information (15 credits)
Human Computer Interaction and User Interface Design (15 credits)
Information Storage and Retrieval Research (15 credits)
Library Services for Children and Young People (15 credits)
Public Libraries (15 credits)

With an optional non-credit rated module:
Practical Computing (0 credits, autumn)

PG Certificate (PGCert)
You'll take modules worth a total of 60 credits from the following:
Education for Information Literacy (30 credits)
Educational Informatics (15 credits)
Information Literacy Research (15 credits)
Information Resources and Information Literacy (15 credits)
Information Retrieval: Search Engines and Digital Libraries (15 credits)

With an optional non-credit rated module:
Practical Computing (0 credits, autumn)

For details on the modules available, see page 5.
Modules

**Academic and Research Libraries**
Introduction to the purposes, functions and practices of specialist library and information/knowledge services in the public and private sectors. It considers the challenges of delivering and developing services in a demanding, fast-moving and complex environment.

**Archive Use and Methodology**
Facilitates understanding of the use of archival and other primary materials in research. Provides greater awareness of the link between original source material and academic research, and allows you to utilise this material first-hand and to consider the methodology behind cataloguing.

**Business Intelligence**
Provides an understanding of the way in which business people use information and why. You’ll study the key channels and sources of business information plus key issues concerning the value of information and library services within business.

**Content Management Systems**
This module aims to make students aware of the requirements for a content management system (CMS) for intra- and internet delivery and to give students the practical skills to design and implement a full content management system.
E-Business and E-Commerce
This module addresses both theoretical and practical aspects of e-business and e-commerce through an exploration of the digital economy. The module aims to equip students with knowledge and skills to understand and manage new ways of doing business in the digital economy.

Education for Information Literacy
Provides critical understanding of approaches to teaching information literacy through reflection on existing experience and competence. You will examine different approaches to education for information literacy, reflect on the different contexts (educational, national, social and disciplinary) in which information literacy is taught and learnt, and apply theory to practice.

Educational Informatics
Introduction to current practice and research in educational informatics. Addresses theoretical and practical issues associated with the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to support learning in the information society. Aims to help you engage critically with issues and debates in the field.

E-Government Information
Introduces you to the policy context of e-government, for example in relation to questions of social inclusion and freedom of information, then examines current issues and practice in the management of government information.
Electronic Publishing
Introduction to electronic publication, including: text encoding and markup languages; the production, retrieval and analysis of electronic multimedia and the commercial and scholarly impact of the electronic mode of delivery.

Healthcare Information
Provides an understanding of healthcare information and its importance to different health-related groups including: the public, patients, healthcare professionals and managers. Introduces you to the climate within which health information services are delivered and examines the provision and use of information by these different health-related groups.

Human Computer Interaction and User Interface Design
Introduces usability principles and the design process for user interfaces in interactive systems. The focus is on the underlying principles of human computer interaction and user-centered design approaches.

Information Literacy Research
Deepen your understanding of the key research problems in information literacy and appropriate research methods for investigating those problems. Learn about the research contexts and problems. Increase your capability in information literacy and relevant research approaches.

Information Resources and Information Literacy
A theoretical and practical introduction to information needs and their satisfaction, the different types of information sources and resources available. Also provides practical experience of basic information searching and evaluation skills using printed and online, internet-based sources.

Information Retrieval: Search Engines and Digital Libraries
Introduces you to a wide range of predominantly computerised techniques for the organisation, searching and processing of textual information. Focus on keyword searching; subject analysis; networked retrieval; record description and user interface issues.
Information Storage and Retrieval Research
Introduces you to current research into computational methods for the storage and retrieval of textual and multimedia information. Looks at both semantically and statistically-based approaches to retrieval.

Library Services for Children and Young People
Introduction to the principles, functions and practices of library services for children and young people. You’ll develop a general understanding of the roles of such services and consider their value and impact.

Public Libraries
Introduction to the principles, politics, value and impact of the public library service. Considers the challenge of delivering such a service and examines key issues and best practice in the field.

Research Methods and Dissertation Preparation
Designed to help you identify and prepare a dissertation proposal. You will also take lectures in social research methods and statistics for information management.
Dissertation
Everyone registered for the MA has to complete a research-based dissertation from the middle of June to September (full-time attendance), after finishing the taught part of the course. The topic is chosen in consultation with members of teaching staff.

There are opportunities to carry out dissertation studies with external organizations. CPD students may wish to undertake a dissertation project directly relevant to their own work situation. Students who have carried out such dissertations have welcomed the opportunity to tackle real-life problems.

The dissertation is a major part of your degree, and you are allocated an academic supervisor to provide advice and guidance throughout the period of study.
What suits you best?

**Full-time study**
The full-time course lasts 12 months, starting in late September each year.

**Part-time study**
Part-time students also start in September each year. The MA takes two to three years to complete. The taught part of the degree is studied over the first two years. You can undertake your dissertation study either in the summer months of your second year to complete in two years, or over the whole of the third year.

The Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate normally take a maximum of two years to complete.

The tuition fees payable are based on the number of credits taken, rather than the length of time taken to complete the programme.

Funding

A small number of studentships for the MA programme are available each year as part of the University’s allocation from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) under their Professional Preparation Masters Scheme. If you intend to apply for this funding, we recommend you apply for a place on the MA as early as possible, ideally by 31st December in the year before the course starts. Competition for this funding is strong. Demand far outweighs the number of studentships available. This funding is not available to overseas students. [www.ahrc.ac.uk](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk)

Career development Loans have often been used by the Department’s British students as the means of affording the fees for its programmes. They are highly recommended and the link below explains how they work. This funding is not available to EU or Commonwealth students. For the latter there are funding schemes administered by British Council and the Association of Commonwealth Universities that may apply. [www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/CareerDevelopmentLoans/DG_10033237](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/CareerDevelopmentLoans/DG_10033237)
What qualifications do I need?
At least a second-class honours degree, or its equivalent, in any subject, plus one to two years practical work experience within the library and information or educational sector.

What if I haven’t got a degree?
If you have no first degree but do have other qualifications and substantial relevant work experience you may be considered for the Postgraduate Diploma or postgraduate Certificate in Information Literacy. Please contact us for further information and to discuss your particular circumstances.

What if English is not my first language?
You need IELTS minimum overall score of 6.5 with at least 6.0 in the writing and speaking components and at least 5.5 in the reading and listening components. Or TOEFL minimum score 575 (paper-based) 232 (computer-based) with at least 5.0 in the written English Test. If your application is successful but you don’t have the necessary scores, you may be asked to attend an English Language course at the University before or during the MA programme.

How to apply

Online
This is the quickest and easiest way to apply. For details: www.sheffield.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/apply

By mail
If you didn’t get a form with this brochure, you can download one from the website (above). Return your completed form and all supporting documents to the address shown on the back cover of this brochure.

Supporting documents
This includes documents such as references and transcripts. You can send these by mail or email them to: inf-apply@sheffield.ac.uk
Your future career

What our graduates will do
Having completed the programme you will be equipped to embark on a career in roles such as Information Literacy Coordinator, Instructional Services Manager, Lifelong Learning Manager, Learning Support Coordinator, Learning Adviser, Training and Outreach Librarian, Academic Liaison/Subject Librarian, Head of Library Instruction, Director of Instructional Resources, Director of Educational Programmes.

Meet the team

Sheila Webber (Programme Coordinator)
Sheila’s work focuses on teaching and research in the field of information literacy, including education for information literacy and the use of Web 2.0 tools.

Sheila Corrall
Sheila has worked in public, special, national and academic libraries. She has a particular interest in strategic management, information resources and the changing roles and skills of information professionals.
Our MA In Information Literacy.