Welcome to the Department of History!

We are really pleased that you have decided to study for your History MA degree here at the University of Sheffield.

This handbook is a short guide to postgraduate study in History at Sheffield. It’s designed to highlight key events as well as the support that the Department, and the University, can offer you during your studies.

You’ll find more information about the MA programme on the MA webpages and in the History Online Postgrad organisation in Blackboard (MOLE).* We recommend taking the time to review the full website information in your first few weeks of study:

www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/current_students/postgraduate/ma

We hope you find this information useful and look forward to welcoming you to the Department!

*If you haven’t studied at Sheffield before, and you have questions about using the University IT systems, you can speak to our Faculty IT staff at the IT drop-in.
# Important Dates

Here are a few key dates to help you get your bearings in the first few weeks of term and as you progress through the year.

## Semester Dates

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<th>Event</th>
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<td><strong>Intro Week:</strong></td>
<td>23 September 2019 - 28 September 2019</td>
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<td><strong>Autumn Semester:</strong></td>
<td>30 September 2019 - 21 December 2019</td>
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<td>20 January 2020 - 8 February 2020</td>
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<td><strong>Christmas Vacation:</strong></td>
<td>22 December 2019 - 19 January 2020 (4 weeks)</td>
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<td><strong>Spring Semester:</strong></td>
<td>10 February 2020 - 4 April 2020</td>
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<td>27 April 2020 - 13 June 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Easter Vacation:</strong></td>
<td>5 April 2020 - 26 April 2020 (3 weeks)</td>
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## Deadlines for assessed and non-assessed work

### Semester one

- **Dissertation Title Form**: 12 noon, 6 November 2019
- **Options (taught in weeks 1-5)**: 12 noon, 20 November 2019
- **Core modules – formative assessment**: 12 noon, 4 December 2019
- **Options (ending after week 5, Directed Reading)**: 12 noon, 22 January 2020
- **Core modules – summative assessment**: 12 noon, 22 January 2020

### Semester two

- **Dissertation Synopsis Form**: 12 noon, 26 February 2020
- **Dissertation Bibliography**: 12 noon, 18 March 2020
- **Options (taught in weeks 1-5)**: 12 noon, 1 April 2020
- **Options (ending after week 5, Work Placement and Directed Reading)**: 12 noon, 20 May 2020
- **MA Presentation Day Practice Session**: From 2pm, 22 May 2020
- **MA Presentation Day**: From 9am, 26 May 2020
- **Dissertation**: 12 noon, 9 September 2020

[www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/current_students/postgraduate/ma/importantdates/2019-20](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/current_students/postgraduate/ma/importantdates/2019-20)
Postgraduate life in the Department

The Department is a friendly place to study. Our staff make a point of ensuring that all students have the opportunity to meet regularly with other postgraduate students, academics and visiting lecturers for support and the exchange of ideas. MA students are encouraged to attend the departmental research seminars, which take place most Tuesdays during term-time.

Our current students are also very active in helping to create a departmental research community of both taught and research postgraduate students and academic staff. Postgraduate students have their own forum and organise a variety of research and social events throughout the year including discussion groups that cover a wide range fields from medieval to modern history and including gender history and world history.

Keep an eye on the postgraduate noticeboard in the History Online Postgrad organisation in Blackboard (MOLE), and the departmental news and events website for more information about events. You will also be emailed about key activities including Departmental and University-wide academic and careers events.

For more information about becoming involved in postgraduate activities see the welcome leaflet from our current postgrads on our registration webpage and join their Facebook group:
www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/current_students/postgraduate/registration
www.facebook.com/groups/502917699838648/

You can also get involved in the postgraduate community by becoming an MA student representative either in the Department or in the Faculty.

Find out more on the MA webpages.
Registration

Registration takes place during Intro Week - 23-27 September.

The first registration activity for MA students is on Tuesday 24 September, so don’t forget to make sure you’re available in Sheffield by this date.

Here’s a check list of the things you will need to do before the end of Intro Week:

1. Attend the University welcome meeting (non-Sheffield graduates only)
2. Attend the History induction and module choice meeting
3. Attend History registration
4. Provide proof of your identity to the Department of History (part-time students taking a postgrad loan only)
5. Have your passport scanned (international students only)
6. Collect your Biometric Residence Permit (international students only)
7. Provide proof of your qualifications (non-Sheffield graduates only)
8. Complete your University registration (in person for full-time students, online for part-time students)
9. Collect your student card (uCard)
10. Attend the Arts and Humanities IT Drop-in (optional - for students with any questions about how to use Sheffield’s IT systems)
11. Attend the PG welcome drinks!

In week one, you should:

12. Attend the Introduction to PG library facilities

You will also be invited to attend a group welcome meeting with your personal tutor during the first few weeks of term.

More details on all of these activities are available in the Intro Week Programme and on our registration webpage: www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/current_students/postgraduate/registration.
University regulations

Admission to the University is subject to the requirement that you will comply with the University's registration procedure and will duly observe the Charter, Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations of the University. The General University Regulations apply to all students in all Faculties. Your attention is drawn to the 'General University Regulations' and the 'General Regulations for Higher Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates'.

www.sheffield.ac.uk/calendar

Our Commitment

You should also review the University's Our Commitment information.

Our Commitment is the University's partnership document struck between staff and students as members of the University. It sets out what we all commit to do to ensure the best learning experience. It has been written by staff and students and is collectively owned by the University and the Students' Union.

Our commitment is best understood as a statement of collective ethos, setting out the qualities and responsibilities underpinning the education on University of Sheffield degree programmes. It has been endorsed by the President and Vice-Chancellor of the University and the President of the Students’ Union, on behalf of all staff and students. You should read this information carefully to make sure that you know both the commitment that you are making as a student and the commitment you can expect from our staff.

www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/ourcommitment
How the MA programme works

You will study 180 credits of modules over the year, or two years, of your degree. Together these modules form our programme, designed to be as flexible as possible.

You will take 105 credits of core modules including a dissertation, Research Presentation and a core module specific to your chosen MA programme. Part-time students will take the Dissertation and Research Presentation modules in the second year of study.

For your remaining 75 credits you will be able to choose from a wide range of option modules. These modules allow you to develop your research skills; pursue an interest in public history or expand your knowledge of particular historical periods or themes.

More information about the MA course structure is available on the MA webpages.

Teaching

Teaching takes place between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday.

Our MA teaching focusses on small group seminars and masterclasses complemented by individual tutorials and supervision sessions. Seminars are usually two hours long and normally range from around 5-15 students in size.

30 credit core modules run for 10 weeks. The Research Presentation and most history option modules are 15 credits and run for 5 weeks. Non-history modules may vary in teaching methods.

Attendance

All students are expected to attend all seminars, and to prepare in advance for these classes. Illness or other causes that prevent your attendance should be notified in advance (see page 13).

It is particularly important at MA level that you attend all seminars. Modules are shorter and the work is more intensive, requiring you to work at a higher level than during your BA degree, so missing multiple seminars is likely to have a detrimental effect on your studies.

Choosing your modules

You will have received information about making provisional module choices by email. You can submit your choices on our website here: www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/current_students/postgraduate/registration.
Balancing your studies
You should normally aim to have an even balance of 90 credits in each semester (or 45 credits in each semester for part-time students). We understand that it may not always be possible to follow this model due to individual module preferences and other factors or commitments.

When you are choosing your modules you should also think about the timetable and assessment deadlines, available on the MA webpages.

Module advice
There will be an opportunity to talk to academic staff about your module choices during Intro Week. If you have any questions before then you are welcome to contact the Postgraduate Support Manager or the Director of MA Programmes.

Please note that module availability is still subject to change i.e. due to student uptake at registration. For non-history modules, the owning department has final approval for acceptance onto their modules and, if space becomes limited, priority may be given to students registered in that department.

Module information
Information about the modules available on your degree programme and the timetable are available on the MA webpages. Course booklets will also be made available on Blackboard (MOLE) ahead of teaching beginning. In the meantime, you may want to take a look at the selected reading on the individual module webpages to help you get a head start before you arrive.

Academic staff have office hours each week and you can email to make an appointment outside of these hours i.e. if you are a part-time student not in university that day.

Changing modules
Subject to availability, you can make changes to your modules during the first three weeks of each semester, although we don’t recommend changing to an option module taking place in weeks 1-5 after its first week.

You should contact the Postgraduate Support Manager to discuss your options and check availability. Your personal tutor and the Director of MA Programmes are also available to provide academic advice on your module choices.

Module Drop-in
The Postgraduate Support Manager will be available in her office 2pm-3pm, Thursday 3 October and 11am-12pm, Tuesday 8 October for questions about modules (or anything else!). Bookable appointments are available on subsequent weeks (usually Tuesdays at 11am-12pm) or you can also email, phone or call in to check availability.
Assessment

The MA programme is assessed primarily through written essays with standard word limits as follows:

- 30 credit modules (formative assessment): 2000 words
- 30 credit modules (final assessment): 6000 words
- Directed Reading: 4000 words
- 15 credit modules: 3000 words
- Dissertation: 15,000 words

Core modules have a formative assignment submitted in November to help you prepare for your final assessment due at the end of the semester. The Research Presentation module is assessed through a presentation day in May.

You should check individual module pages for exact assessment requirements.

Deadlines

Assessment deadlines are on page 2 of this handbook and on the MA webpages.

It is important that you meet all deadlines - work that is submitted late will incur penalties. If you experience difficulties effecting your work that may require an extension you should get in touch with us as soon as possible (see page 14).

Submission

Written work is submitted through Turnitin, the University’s plagiarism detection software by the appropriate deadline. Essays should have a coversheet which includes your word count. Essays should not include your name.

Presenting your work

The Department’s style guide is available on the MA webpages. It offers useful advice on presentation as well as guidelines about referencing and bibliographies.

Word limits

Word limits are set for a reason and it is very important that you adhere to them. Penalties will be applied if you exceed any word limit by 5% or more i.e. for a 3000-word essay, penalties will apply on word counts of 3150 and above.

Avoiding use of unfair means

It is important to be aware of the University’s guidelines and how to avoid the use of unfair means, including self-plagiarism. Please ensure that you carefully read the guidance on the MA webpages.
Failures and resubmissions

Students who fail to successfully complete 180 credits are allowed one resubmission attempt per module, including the dissertation. Grades for resubmitted work are capped at 50.

Degree classifications

Your degree classification will be awarded anonymously. It is, therefore, important if you experience any extenuating circumstances such as serious illness affecting your performance that you report these in good time so that they can be considered before the final anonymous degree classification board meeting (see pages 13-14).

To be awarded the degree of MA, students must normally complete a total of 180 credits including 120 credits of taught modules and the 60 credit Dissertation, achieving marks of 50 or better in each separate element.

Your degree classification will be determined by the outcome of two calculations:

- your weighted average grade
- the distribution of your weighted grades

At the Exam Board’s discretion, you may be recommended the award of an MA degree with merit or distinction as follows:

**Merit**

To be eligible for the award of the MA with merit you must achieve a weighted mean grade of not less than 59.5 over all 180 credits taken and a mark of not less than 60 in at least 90 credits worth of modules.

**Distinction**

To be eligible for the award of the MA with distinction you must achieve a weighted mean grade of not less than 69.5 over all 180 credits taken and a mark of not less than 70 in at least 90 credits worth of modules.

Students who are not recommended for the award of a Masters degree may be eligible for the respective award of a Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate.

More information

All of the information that you need about assessment is available on our MA webpages, we recommend reading all of this information carefully.
Study facilities

Libraries

The University has three main libraries: the Information Commons and the Information Commons in the Diamond are the main taught student libraries, and Western Bank is the main research library. There is a wealth of material available – over 1,500,000 printed volumes and 10,000 electronic journals, including a wide variety of Special Collections – and staff to help you find what you need.

The Information Commons (open 24/7) and the Information Commons in the Diamond offer over 2,500 study spaces including over 900 desks with computers; study desks for reading and use with laptops; soft-seating areas and silent desk space both with and without computers and bookable group study rooms.

Boston Spa Minibus – the library also runs a regular free minibus service to Boston Spa’s British Library Document Supply Centre allowing you easy access to their extensive collections.

You should take some time to familiarise yourself with the library and its resources. You’ll find useful links under the academic facilities section of our MA webpages; and you can also contact the library at library@sheffield.ac.uk with any questions.

Computers and printing

There are over 2000 computers available to students across the University, located both in the libraries and in dedicated computer rooms. You can search for available computers on the CiCs website.

Printers, photocopiers and scanners are available across campus – you can use your uCard to pre-load printing and copying credit.

The Computing Services department also offers additional support and services including access to software for use on your own computer; equipment loans; and training courses.

Free Office 365 available – once you have your University email account set up you can choose to access a free version of Office for use on your personal laptop.

Find out more about the IT facilities available on the CiCs website: www.sheffield.ac.uk/cics/students and on our IT Induction webpage: www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/it-introduction.
Supporting your skills development

There is a wide range of support available to help you develop your skills and make the most out of your MA degree.

Information on study techniques for MA students is available on our website and there are a range of sessions designed to help you develop specific skills:

**Monday 23 – Friday 27 September 2019, 9am-4pm**

Arts and Humanities IT induction drop-in – you can call in for a one-to-one chat with one of our IT Technicians if you want any advice about using the University’s IT systems such as Gmail, MUSE, Blackboard (MOLE). You will also find information on our website: [www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/it-introduction](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/it-introduction).

**Wednesday 2 October 2019, 1pm-2pm**

Introduction to PG Library Facilities – even if you took your BA at Sheffield, this talk will help you make the most out of the library’s facilities during your MA.

**Wednesday 6 November 2019, 1pm-3pm**

ICT Skills Master Class with James Pearson – this session is part of HST6801 Research Skills for Historians but is open to all students. It covers topics such as search techniques, databases, web-based resources and the bibliographical management tool EndNote.

See the important dates webpage for locations: [www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/current_students/postgraduate/ma/importantdates](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/current_students/postgraduate/ma/importantdates)

**University academic support services:**

**301: Student Skills and Development Centre.** 301 offers a range of workshops to help develop your study and academic skills [www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/301](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/301).

**English Language Teaching Centre.** The ELTC offers language support to all students including support with English language aimed at international students and a writing advisory service, which is designed to help all students who want to improve their writing skills [www.sheffield.ac.uk/eltc](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/eltc).

**The University Library.** The library offers a range of information skills workshops; resources and advice [www.sheffield.ac.uk/library/study](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/library/study).
Helping you plan for the future

Both the University and the Department are keen to support students to plan for their future.

The Department of History has a dedicated Careers Liaison Officer who works alongside the University’s career service to offer careers support, including careers events. The Department also has a range of events in Autumn, including the opportunity to meet history alumni.

The Careers Service also offer a range of careers events each semester on topics such as interview skills; effective communication skills; CV writing; careers in Academia; networking including events specifically aimed at postgraduate students.

The Careers Service can also give more individual advice and guidance on career options after your degree as well as helping you to find a job or work experience during your studies.

More information about careers support is available on our MA webpages.
Support for health or personal circumstances

Your personal tutor is always available to talk to you about any academic progress or personal problems you might experience during your studies. If you have any worries about your academic progress, choices of modules, are struggling with your workload, or have any financial; health or personal worries, come and speak with your personal tutor. Your personal tutor may not always be able to help personally, but they will help you to find more specialised sources of support if needed.

You are also welcome to speak to the Postgraduate Support Manager, Director of MA Programmes, Director of Graduate Programmes or any other member of staff.

What do I do if extenuating circumstances affect my studies?

During your studies you may experience difficulties which could affect your academic performance. These are known as ‘extenuating circumstances’ and may include illness; personal problems and other difficult events.

If you experience extenuating circumstances, you should submit an Extenuating Circumstances Form. If applicable, this should be supported by appropriate medical evidence. If you require medical evidence from the University Health Service (UHS) you should complete their on-line version of the Extenuating Circumstances Form.

We would also recommend seeking support and your personal tutor is a good first point of contact.

What if I need to miss a seminar?

It is almost inevitable that illness will affect your attendance at some point. If you need to miss a seminar please make sure to email your module tutor - in advance wherever possible - explaining why you are unable to attend.

You should also submit a Self-Certification Form. Alternatively, if your illness lasts more than a week or you feel it may have a wider impact on your studies, you should complete an Extenuating Circumstances Form.

You should also ensure that you attend your tutor’s office hours, or arrange to see them at another time, to catch up on any work that you have missed.
What should I do if I have a pre-existing medical condition?

If you have pre-existing medical condition, whether it is physical or mental health related, it is important that you access support early on in your degree. This is particularly important for the MA programme due the first deadlines being in November and the short overall duration of the degree.

You should contact the Disability and Dyslexia Support Service, who will be able to offer advice about suitable support and, if appropriate, provide us with a Learning Support Plan. This will help ensure that we are able to offer you all of the support you need to make the most of the MA degree. A Learning Support Plan will also act as medical evidence should you need an extension for any of your assessed work.

Sheffield graduates with existing Learning Support Plans

If you took your BA degree at Sheffield and had a Learning Support Plan (LSP) in place, you should still arrange to visit DDSS at the start of the academic year to review your support requirements and ensure that we have an up-to-date LSP that is relevant to the MA programme. Please note that your LSP from the BA degree will not be automatically roll forward.

More information about the Disability and Dyslexia Support Service and other useful services is available on page 15 and the MA webpages.

You’ll find more information and links to the forms on our website here: www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/current_students/postgraduate/ma/support

Extensions

If you experience health or serious personal difficulties which mean you are struggling to meet a deadline, you should request an extension.

We will look at circumstances sympathetically but extensions cannot be guaranteed, so it is important that you submit any extension requests for consideration in good time using our online extension request form. You’ll find more information and the extension form on our website here: www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/current_students/postgraduate/ma/assessment/extensions.
Sources of support available at the University

**SSiD** if you have a query or need some information SSiD is often a great place to start. They have extensive knowledge of University processes and can also signpost or redirect you to other specialist staff [www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid)

**Student Advice Service** this is a free, friendly Students’ Union Service, providing advice and information on various matters including money, housing, academic and immigration issues [http://su.sheffield.ac.uk/student-advice-centre](http://su.sheffield.ac.uk/student-advice-centre)

**University Health Service** all students are encouraged to register with the UHS at the start of the academic year [www.sheffield.ac.uk/health](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/health)

**Disability and Dyslexia Support Services** if you have a disability, or become aware of an issue during the course of your studies, you should contact DDSS [www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/disability](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/disability)

**Student Access to Mental Health Support** if you develop a new mental health concern during your studies, or experience an exacerbation of an existing condition, you should contact SAMHS [www.sheffield.ac.uk/mental-wellbeing](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/mental-wellbeing)

**University Counselling Service** open to all students, the UCS offers one-off events and regular group drop-ins including sessions on mindfulness and positivity [www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/counselling/services/workshops](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/counselling/services/workshops)

**Big White Wall** offers free and immediate access to 24/7 peer and professional mental health support [www.sheffield.ac.uk/mental-wellbeing/bww](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/mental-wellbeing/bww)

**Sheffield University Nightline** is the University’s confidential listening and information telephone service. Run by trained student volunteers, it operates 8.00pm-8.00am every night during term time. Listening line: 0114 222 8787; info line: 0114 222 8788 [www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/contacts/nightline](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/contacts/nightline)

**Other useful links**

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<tr>
<td>Frequently Asked Questions</td>
<td><a href="http://ssid.shef.ac.uk/asksheffield">http://ssid.shef.ac.uk/asksheffield</a></td>
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Contact Details

Your first point of contact in the Department is the Postgraduate Support Manager. Beky Hasnip is located in room 1.13 (opposite the History reception).

You’ll find the History Reception on the first floor, green wing of Jessop West.

Opening Hours – weekdays 10:00-12:30 and 13:30-16:00

Jessop West

1 Upper Hanover Street
Sheffield S3 7RA

Tel: 0114 222 2555
Email: history@sheffield.ac.uk
Website: www.sheffield.ac.uk/history

Postgraduate Support Manager:
Miss Beky Hasnip (r.hasnip@sheffield.ac.uk, 0114 22 22552)

Director of MA Programmes:
Dr Kate Davison (kate.davison@sheffield.ac.uk 0114 22 22562)

MA Personal Tutors:
The MA Personal Tutors are Professor Siobhan Lambert-Hurley and Professor Benjamin Ziemann. Find out who your personal tutor in the History Online PG organisation in Blackboard (MOLE) (available after Intro Week).

Director of Graduate Studies:
Semester one: Dr Charles West (c.m.west@sheffield.ac.uk, 0114 22 22608)
Semester two: Dr James Shaw (j.e.shaw@sheffield.ac.uk, 0114 22 22591)

IT Support in Arts & Humanities:
Email: Arts-IT@sheffield.ac.uk | Tel: 0114 22 29700

Contact details for all staff:
www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/staff

Office hours:
Academic staff: www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/current_students/office_hours