

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	MA Victorian Studies (Level 7)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	PG Dip; PG Cert
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home school/other teaching departments	Creative Arts, Culture and Communication
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (1 year) Part-time (2 year) October
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	N/A
Birkbeck Course Code	TMAVCSTD_C
HECoS Code	100320
Start date of programme	Prior to 2008/9
Date of programme approval	Prior to 2008/9
Date of last programme amendment approval	November 2022
Valid for academic entry year	2024-25
Programme Director	Victoria Mills
Date of last revision to document	11/09/2023

Admissions requirements

Normally a second-class honours degree (2:2) or above in a relevant subject such as English, history, philosophy or history of art, but a degree in other subjects will be considered, as will other qualifications where students are able to demonstrate a well developed knowledge of and interest in the Victorian period.

Course aims

Drawing on Birkbeck's position as a world-leading centre in the field of nineteenth-century studies, the MA Victorian Studies offers students the chance to take a genuinely interdisciplinary approach to studying the literature, culture and history of Victorian Britain. As well as encountering a compelling range of Victorian texts (novels, poetry, essays) this interdisciplinary MA introduces students to a wide range of Victorian visual and material culture including painting, book illustration and photography. Aimed at those with a general interest in the Victorian era as well as students wishing to pursue a route towards PhD, the contexts, themes and ideas studied on this course do justice to the energy and variety of the Victorian period and its modern legacies.

The core modules introduce some of the most significant debates, ideas and events of the nineteenth century, and offers students the chance to develop new critical approaches to Victorian studies. The option modules allow students to pursue their own interests in the field of Victorian studies and beyond.

Students in their final year of study have the chance to take an internship module. Successful interns spend a term working with one of London's Victorian cultural institutions, gaining first-hand experience of working in the cultural sector and using their host institution's archives to develop a unique research project. Previous interns have worked with the Bethlem Museum of the Mind, the Salvation Army Heritage Centre and Archive, and the Guildhall Art Gallery, and have developed their projects into funded doctoral research topics.

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time – 1 year					
7	AREN232S7	Progress and Anxiety	30	Comp	1
7	AREN166S7	Modernising Victorians	30	Comp	1
7		Option 1	30	Option	2
7		Option 2	30	Option	2
7	AREN295Z7	Dissertation Skills	0	Comp	3
7	AREN145D7	Dissertation (Literature and Culture 1800-present)	60	Core	2-3
Part-time – 2 years					
Year 1					
7	AREN232S7	Progress and Anxiety	30	Comp	1
7		Option 1	30	Option	2
7	AREN295Z7	Dissertation Skills	0	Comp	3
Year 2					
7	AREN166S7	Modernising Victorians	30	Comp	1
7		Option 2	30	Option	2
7	AREN145D7	Dissertation (Literature and Culture 1800-present)	60	Core	2-3

Indicative options:

AREN284S7 Victorian Femininities: the Myths, the Power, the Politics

AREN119S7 Death in Victorian Culture

AREN043S7 Victorian London: Literature, Culture and the Urban Experience

Students may take one module (30 credits) from outside of the subject area.

How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you. Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Your learning for this course will be organised around the activities outlined below.

The programme is taught through a combination of lectures, seminars, individual tutorials, supervisions, and workshops. These various forms allow for a fully-rounded and diverse educational experience. The teaching and learning methods of the MA are designed as a tiered structure of courses, beginning with core courses, specialising in optional courses, and ending with a dissertation with accompanying dedicated and graduated study skills. Teaching reflects the increasing specialisation of knowledge, moving from large core course classes (the first of which bridges students' previous training by addressing the particular expectations of MA level work with study skills and early exercises; the second of which encourage more independent critical work), through to smaller optional classes, to a one-to-one supervisory role.

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will be through the following types of assessment:

Short written exercises and essays which will develop in length and expected complexity as you progress through your studies and a dissertation.

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

Subject Specific:

1. discuss a defined body of knowledge related to the Victorian period across more than one discipline.
2. identify recent developments in the field of Victorian Studies, demonstrating a good grasp of the secondary field and of current debates in the subject at the highest level.
3. show familiarity with a wide range of nineteenth-century primary sources and with modes of understanding and contextualising such sources in relation to more than one discipline.

Intellectual:

4. independently formulate research questions
5. demonstrate highly developed critical skills
6. sustain a critical argument at a high level.

7. recognise and make use of a range of methodological approaches to their field of study.
8. communicate complex concepts and critical arguments in a lucid manner.

Practical:

9. Research to a high level of sophistication, using databases, digital archives and other electronic resources.
10. locate and use a range of primary source materials including manuscripts and archive materials.
11. present arguments orally in a confident and clear manner and respond to other students' oral presentations.
12. demonstrate good organizational skills, and work independently as well as within a group.

Careers and further study

You will find graduates of this programme in the following kinds of roles:

Graduates can pursue career paths in academia and the wider education sector, publishing and editing, the creative arts, library, museum and archive work, arts administration, journalism and writing-based careers. Careers of our recent graduates include:

- Policy Adviser at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
- Classics Editor at Penguin Books
- Curator at the Guildhall Art Gallery
- Company Manager at the Jupiter Theatre in Florida
- Director of Education at *No More Marking*
- Curator of Contemporary Literary Archives at the British Library

We are also proud of graduates forging their way as successful writers and novelists.

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website](#).

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services](#). This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

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