

# BA Arts and Humanities

## Guide for Applicants 2013-2014

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## Term Dates 2013-14

<u>Autumn Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>	<u>Summer Term</u>
Monday 30 September 2013 to Friday 13 December 2013	Monday 6 January 2014 to Friday 21 March 2014	Monday 28 April 2014 to Friday 11 July 2014
<u>Autumn Closures</u>	<u>Spring Closures</u>	<u>Summer Closures</u>
The College will close at 5pm on Monday 23 December 2013, re- opening at 9am on Wednesday, 2 January 2014	Easter closure <i>to be confirmed</i>	<p>The College will be closed on Monday, 5 May 2014 re-opening at 9am on Tuesday, 6 May 2014</p> <p>The College will be closed on Monday, 26 May 2014, re-opening at 9am on Tuesday, 27 May 2014</p> <p>The College will be closed from 8pm Friday, 22 August 2014, re-opening at 9am on Tuesday, 26 August 2014</p>

# Introduction

## **Birkbeck, University of London**

Thinking of applying to study BA Arts and Humanities at Birkbeck? This guide includes information that will help you find out more about what we offer, how to take the next steps, and what the structure of the Arts and Humanities degree involves for both part-time and full-time students. You can also look us up and explore online at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/english/>, and there are further links within the guide for you to pursue. We look forward to finding out more about you.

## **Birkbeck, University of London**

Birkbeck, University of London is a unique institution with a proud history. Founded as the London Mechanics Institute in 1823, it was subsequently incorporated into the University of London in 1926, specialising in education at university level for part-time students, for which it holds a royal charter. In the twenty-first century, both full-time and part-time students now benefit from Birkbeck's long tradition of outstanding teaching expertise and support, as well as its international academic renown. Voted number one in London for quality of teaching by students in the 2012 National Student Survey, Birkbeck is a vibrant place to study.

BA classes at Birkbeck begin at 6pm. Full-time students will find the evening teaching hours free them to take full advantage of the opportunities for study and development during the day, when the resources of the college, libraries, and London itself, are fully available. Part-time students who work during the day, and may be older than the conventional student in higher education, will discover staff are well versed in, and sympathetic to, their particular needs.

Academic staff at Birkbeck combine teaching with an active engagement in research. Many of your teachers will be highly-regarded authorities on the subjects that they teach. This means that the modules that you take will reflect the most recent scholarship and approaches within the field of the Arts and the Humanities.

## **Location**

Birkbeck College is in the heart of the Bloomsbury district in the centre of London, one minute walk from the British Museum and five minutes from the British Library. It is next door to the major collections of the Senate House Library, and to University of London Union, with its sports, clubs and leisure facilities. The Department of English in the School of Arts is located at 43 Gordon Square, WC1, in an elegant block of houses which were once the home of the novelist Virginia Woolf, and the economist John Maynard Keynes. Find us at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/maps>.

## **BA Arts and Humanities at Birkbeck, University of London**

BA Arts and Humanities at Birkbeck, University of London is a flexible and dynamic interdisciplinary degree that reflects the fascinating complexity of modern thought and culture. If your intellectual interests range across a number of fields – literature, the visual arts, the media, film – and you are looking for a degree which will adequately reflect the diversity of your interests in culture and society, BA Arts and Humanities may be the course for you.

BA Arts and Humanities at Birkbeck combines a carefully structured spine of core courses with a wide range of options taught by world leading specialists across the School of Arts. The programme gives you the flexibility to pursue multidisciplinary interests and then identify an area of specialization. From your base in the Department of English and Humanities (English, Humanities, Theatre Studies, Creative Writing) you will be able to draw on the full resources of the Birkbeck School of Arts. You can choose modules offered by departments including History of Art and Screen Media (medieval to contemporary art, architecture and visual culture), European Cultures and Languages (French and German language, literature, culture, and film), Media and Cultural Studies (Journalism, Radio, Television, Film, Digital Culture, Japanese Cultural Studies), and Iberian and Latin American Studies (Iberian and Latin American Languages, Art, Cinema, Literature, Cultural Geography and Politics). Thus, BAAH is designed to offer you a wide slate of modules as well as the opportunity to specialize following your specific interests and paths.

The degree gives you the opportunity to develop a personalized and coherent programme of study in consultation with your personal tutor and representatives from the departments within the School of Arts.

Our course modules will introduce you to the most innovative, challenging, and interesting theories and thinkers, writers and artists in the arts and humanities today. The Interdisciplinary pathway run by the Humanities team provides the intellectual coherence and the critical skills you need to move between disciplines.

If you are studying the course part-time, the structure is as follows: in year one you will take the core module, 'Key Concepts in Cultural Analysis: The Production of the Human' and 'Introduction to Methods in Cultural Study' as well as a third module of your choice from Level 4 options across the School of Arts. In your second year you will take the core module 'Connecting the Arts', which consolidates the work of your first year through a comparative approach to the differences and convergences between the arts from the Renaissance to the Present. You will take two more modules from a wide range of options from across the School of Arts with stimulating inter-disciplinary courses which address key aspects of contemporary culture and the historical origins of modernity. These interdisciplinary modules provided by the Humanities team examine specific historical periods (e.g. the Enlightenment, Romanticism, Empire, Twentieth-Century Globalization) and particular critical issues and movements (e.g. narratives of gender, sexuality and the body, 'race' and cultural identity, modernist art and literature, the "beat generation", the Situationists), through a variety of artefacts and phenomena: photography, film, the visual arts, literature, philosophical and sociological texts and cultural theory. In years three and four you will continue to deepen your understanding of particular areas of the arts and humanities: in year three you take a further three options, completing your studies in year four with two more options plus the final year project.

If you choose the full-time route, you will cover the same ground in three years of study. In year one you will study the core modules 'Key Concepts in Cultural Analysis: The Production of the Human' and 'Introduction to Methods in Cultural Study' as well as a two modules of your choice from Level 4 options across the School of Arts. In year two, you will take the core module 'Connecting the Arts', plus two Level 5 options and one Level 6 option. In the third and final year of your degree you will be taking a further three option modules plus the final year research project.

The programme provides a thorough grounding in the approaches, methods and concerns of one of the traditional disciplines, with the chance to explore a range of new

questions that cut across disciplinary boundaries. For example, what does it mean to be “human”? Are we living in a post-human epoch? How have ethnicity and gender shaped identities in the past and the present? Do humans create the spaces they inhabit or do these spaces create them? What happens to our sense of cultural identity when we are uprooted from one culture and transplanted into another? How has the proliferation of visual images since the late nineteenth century transformed world cultures? What are the politics and ethics of cultural forms? Does sexuality have a history? In what ways is our understanding of our own bodies mediated by the culture in which we live? Is gender a biological fact or something which we learn to perform?

In sum, the BA Arts and Humanities combines the flexibility to explore different disciplines with the opportunity to specialize in your areas of interest. Importantly, this programme offers you support and guidance in making your choices, so that your studies are coherent and develop progressively. Your personal tutor and representatives from the departments within the School of Arts will be very important in giving you academic guidance in shaping your programme.

The Department of English and Humanities, where BAAH is housed, is part of Birkbeck’s thriving research culture. Birkbeck was very successful in the 2008 national Research Assessment Exercise with 90% of our research deemed of ‘quality that is recognised internationally for its originality, significance and rigour’, of which 35% was declared to be ‘world-leading’. Birkbeck has a serious commitment to the Humanities – not only do we run a successful MA programme in Cultural and Critical Studies (if you wish to continue your Humanities studies at postgraduate level), but Birkbeck also has an Institute for the Humanities directed by the internationally renowned Cultural Theorists Slavoj Žižek and Costas Douzinas, with Sander Gilman and Etienne Balibar as Fellows. This institute promotes research into the Humanities and organises lectures, conferences and seminar series. In addition, the School of Arts is a hub for scholarly exchange and the promotion of the humanities within the wider public sphere. It regularly hosts leading international experts and encourages dialogue between academic and non-academic constituencies. In November 2011, for example, the School of Arts organized a talk by Man Booker nominated novelist Sarah Waters specifically for Birkbeck students enrolled in the School of Arts.

The BA Arts and Humanities is an honours degree awarded by the University of London. It is specifically geared for adult students who work during the daytime. Teaching therefore takes place on weekdays in the evenings, between 6.00 and 9.00pm. Part-time students usually complete the degree in four years, with attendance at Birkbeck on either two or three evenings a week. If you study full-time, you can expect to attend classes on three or four evenings a week.

# How to Apply

## Full-time mode

Full-time applications for entry will only be considered through UCAS.

To apply via UCAS, see their website for details: [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

Entry requirements are BBB at A-level or equivalent, although we may waive these formal entry requirements and make our own assessment of your skills and knowledge.

The early deadline for applications to UCAS is **15 January 2013**, although late applications may be received via UCAS until 30 June 2013. Anyone who is later than 30 June will need to apply via clearing in August 2013.

Fees: details of full-time fees and information at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/undergraduate/fees>

## Part-time mode

To be considered for a place on the part-time degree, applicants should complete an online application form available from the Birkbeck website at: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/ug/humanities/UBAARTHU.html> For applicants aged 21 or above there are no formal qualifications required for entrance to the degree, hence the application form should be completed as fully as possible, especially the section headed 'any other relevant skills or interests'. Please note that if you state on your application form that you have formal qualifications such as 'A' levels in any subject, you will be required to produce documentation for the Registry when you enrol. Applicants below the age of 21 should meet the entry requirements for full-time students as given in the paragraph above.

Fees: details of part-time fees and information, including a useful video, at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/undergraduate/fees>

## The Interview:

We normally interview all applicants for the BA Arts and Humanities, regardless of qualifications. Interviews are held throughout the academic year, normally from December to late August. However, applicants are encouraged to apply early, as we expect the demand for places to be high. Moreover, early enrolment also means you can make full use of Birkbeck's library facilities over the summer, including borrowing books and using online databases and other resources.

You will normally be interviewed by one or more members of the academic staff. You will not be expected to be an expert on a subject but to demonstrate an interest in the subjects for which you have applied. The interview is more likely to have a successful outcome if you have a clear overall view of what you wish to gain from the degree, and if you have a good sense of the level of commitment involved. Please take time to explore our webpages before you come to the interview. This is as much an opportunity for you to ask questions about the subjects you will be studying and to make sure that the course is right for you, as it is a chance for us to assess your suitability. The interview usually lasts about 20 minutes.

## The Entrance Task:

After interview you may be asked to complete a short entrance task (normally a commentary on a given passage or a brief essay on a book, film, exhibition, or TV programme of your choice). If that is the case, we will make arrangements for the task then, but you can also obtain copies of the task from:

BA Arts and Humanities Administrator  
The Department of English and Humanities  
School of Arts Office  
0203 073 8378  
[e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk)  
[englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk)

After completing the task, please send it to the Arts and Humanities Administrator.

### **What are we looking for?**

Students who apply to come onto our degree programme may be asked to complete a short entrance task. This helps the admissions officer and the person who interviews you to look at your *potential* to study and achieve at degree level; it is not expected that, at this early stage, you will be able to write a perfect piece of academic work. Your interviewer is not looking for particular answers; what is being reviewed here is your own ideas and your ability to express them.

If you choose to write about a book, film or television programme, or exhibition, choose something that reflects your real enthusiasms and interests. You may need to describe what you have read or seen, and you should aim to do that clearly and concisely. It is important to analyse and your chosen cultural object, rather than just describe it. This might involve, for example, commenting on the type of voice the narrator of a story adopts, or investigating how a television programme explores ideas about social class or ethnicity, for example.

If you choose to write a commentary on a specific passage, you should read it carefully at least twice before beginning. Once you feel clear about **what** the passage is saying, you should pay attention to **how** it is being said. Look up words you don't understand in a dictionary. You might want to think about the implied audience or the historical context of the piece. You should attempt to give a sense of how you assess the argument that is being made as well as showing awareness of how it is being made.

### **Beginning to write**

Make a plan. This will help you to organize your thoughts into a structure when you are writing. Try to give your essay a sense of structure. A paragraph's introduction might explain the main point you want to make; the rest of your essay should prove that point, using examples from your chosen text.

You should aim for clarity of expression in your writing style. Sometimes the most sophisticated way to express things is also the simplest. Pay attention to your written English, checking the spelling and points of grammar before you send it off.

### **Further help**

If you have general questions about the degree or completing this task you might like to come to one of our open evenings (details of these are on the Birkbeck website) and talk to members of staff or you could contact the admissions tutor via: [englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk)

There are a number of helpful books on writing and grammar which you might find useful to look at both to aid you in this task and also as part of the process of beginning a degree in Humanities. Some recommendations are listed below. You should be able to find copies of these in libraries and bookshops.

David Amigoni and Julie Sanders, *Get set for university: English Literature* (Edinburgh University Press 2003)  
Paul Goring, Jeremy Hawthorn and Domhnall Mitchell, *Studying Literature: The Essential Companion* (London: Arnold, 2001)  
Andrew Green, *Starting an English Literature Degree* (London: Palgrave, 2009).  
Lynne Truss, *Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation* (London: Profile, 2003).



# Arts and Humanities Degree Structure

Full-time students will complete the degree in three years. Part-time students will complete the degree in four years, Decelerated part-time students will complete the degree in six years.

All students take a total of **twelve modules** to complete the degree. The modules are divided according to academic level: level 4 modules are introductory courses, and studied in the first year; level 5 modules are intermediate and normally studied in the second year. Level 6 modules are advanced and normally studied in the final year/s of the degree. Each module usually lasts one academic year (occasionally you may take two half modules to make up a full module in some subjects).

In your first year, you will take two Humanities Modules. In year 2 you take the core second-year Humanities Course, 'Connecting the Arts', which asks you to write a 'Research Essay' on a question you formulate yourself and in so doing it helps you gain the independence you need to progress towards the Final Year Project. You can then choose the rest of your courses in years 1 to 4 from a wide range of courses run by specialists in the School of Arts as well as choosing from the full range of those offered by the Humanities team. Overall, you will be taking twelve modules: 6 School of Arts and 5 Humanities modules. The twelfth unit is always the Humanities Final Year Project, written on a topic of your choice, with the support of a supervisor.

In most cases, a module is taught one evening a week for twenty-five weeks, from early October to June (some of the language modules require attendance on two evenings and Media modules commence in the final week of September). Classes may be lectures, seminars or workshops as appropriate and most last 1.5 hours. The modules are assessed by a variety of methods, such as an unseen examination, a seen examination, or essay.

If for any reason you would like to deviate from the course structure outlined above and summarised in the tables below, please consult the Arts and Humanities Course Director.

## Structure of the Degree Full-time

<b>Year One</b>	Humanities Core Module: 'The Production of the Human' (L4)	Humanities Module: 'Introduction to Methods in Cultural Studies' (L4)	School of Arts L4 Module	School of Arts L4 Module
<b>Year Two</b>	Humanities Core Module: Connecting the Arts (L5)	Humanities or School of Arts L5 Module	Humanities or School of Arts L5 Module	Humanities or School of Arts L6 Module
<b>Year Three</b>	Humanities or School of Arts L6 Module	Humanities or School of Arts L6 Module	Humanities or School of Arts L6 Module	Humanities Project

### Structure of the Degree Part-Time

<b>Year One</b>	Humanities Core Module: 'The Production of the Human' (L4)	Humanities Module: 'Introduction to Methods in Cultural Studies' (L4)	School of Arts L4 Module
<b>Year Two</b>	Humanities Core Module: Connecting the Arts (L5)	School of Arts L4 Module	Humanities or School of Arts L5 Module
<b>Year Three</b>	Humanities or School of Arts L5 Module	Humanities or School of Arts L6 Module	Humanities or School of Arts L6 Module
<b>Year Four</b>	Humanities or School of Arts L6 Module	Humanities or School of Arts L6 Module	Humanities Project

### Structure of the Degree Decelerated

<b>Year One</b>	Humanities Core Module: 'The Production of the Human' (L4)	Humanities Module: 'Introduction to Methods in Cultural Studies' (L4)
<b>Year Two</b>	School of Arts L4 Module	School of Arts L4 Module
<b>Year Three</b>	Humanities Core Module: Connecting the Arts (L5)	Humanities or School of Arts L5 Module
<b>Year Four</b>	Humanities or School of Arts L5 Module	Humanities or School of Arts L6 Module
<b>Year Five</b>	Humanities or School of Arts L6 Module	Humanities or School of Arts L6 Module
<b>Year Six</b>	Humanities or School of Arts L6 Module	Humanities Project

## Humanities Modules

### Year One (Core)

#### The Production of the Human

In this module we look into what is meant by the 'human'. We will do this by studying a number of important texts which have (directly, or indirectly) addressed this question, from Niccolò Machiavelli's infamous political treatise, *The Prince*, written in the sixteenth century, to twentieth-century discussions about the Human and the Humanities, such as Sigmund Freud, Franz Fanon and Michel Foucault. The texts include literary works such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and philosophical or theoretical works such as Marx and Engels's *The German Ideology*, Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* or Franz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*. We ask questions such as: In what ways have definitions of what it means to be human changed over time? How have different power structures and forms of technology shaped those changes? Why have different human groups at different times been represented as not being fully human? The module is assessed by one critical commentary, one short and one longer essay, and a short reflective exercise.

#### Introduction to Methods in Cultural Study

This is a study skills module designed to run alongside the core Humanities level 4 module The Production of the Human. It combines tutor-led study skills with the fostering of independent and peer-based learning. Many of the sessions are workshop-based

allowing time to examine some of the conceptual questions raised in the Production of the Human. There will be opportunity to explore issues such as autobiography and the evaluation of self, how names and classifications function, who is excluded in declarations of human rights, or how bodies are imagined and managed in culture. These sessions also encourage an esprit de corps and self-reflection in student-led discussion. The workshop sessions are interspersed with more focused skills sessions, led by specialist librarians or writing tutors, which introduce key study skills in relation to Humanities. The final two sessions offer practical advice on exams and the coming year – as well as including an element of celebration. Assessment takes the form of a log, kept throughout the year, which allows for reflection on, and consolidation of, the tasks undertaken in workshops.

## **Year Two (Core)**

### **Connecting the Arts**

This module is taught by lectures and workshop sessions. It introduces you to the differences and/or convergences between the arts from the Renaissance to the present. It is designed to develop the ability to compare cultural objects in different media, helping you to make sense of the connections between what you studied in your first year, as well as The module is articulated into four blocks, which reflect the divisions between the arts: the verbal, the visual, the temporal and the spatial. as well as introducing you to the different methodologies of the different disciplines in the School of Arts. The lectures are taught by specialists across the School, so you will gain a strong grounding in and taste for a range of cultural objects (including photographs, pictures, maps, sound and screen media), as well as disciplinary approaches (art history, media and cultural studies, modern languages and literature).

This module is an Interdisciplinary Navigational Module taught by the Humanities team. Interdisciplinary Navigational Modules are designed to build on the skills of independent research gained through Year 1 courses and enhance independence in research. These courses are assessed by two essays and a bibliography. In the first term you will be writing an essay chosen from a list handed out by your tutor around week 5, which you will need to submit in the first day of the Spring term; in your second term you will be working on your Research Essay. A Research Essay is a longer piece of writing (ca. 3,500 words) on a topic of your own choosing in response to the key ideas of the course you are taking. You will normally be asked to submit a title and bibliography in week 10 of the Spring Term, and meet your tutor to discuss your topic in a personal tutorial in week 11. You will submit your essay in week 5 of the Summer Term. Identifying your own topic and drawing up your own bibliography prepares you for the Final Year Project, a sustained piece of independent research in which you will set the title and bibliography on the basis of an area of personal interest, rather than on a course and syllabus designed by a tutor.

Other Interdisciplinary Navigational Modules are run by Humanities; these change every year, but they include:

Literature and Empire  
Literature and Visual Culture  
Enlightenment and its Others  
Narratives of the Body

## Years 2-4 (Options)

In years 2-4 of your degree, you can take a range of options taught by the Humanities team and specialists in the School of Arts. When you are preparing to choose your modules for the second year of your degree you will discuss your course choices with your personal tutor. The options chosen will need to have the approval of the Course Director, whose role it is to make sure that your choices add up to a coherent course of study. The same procedure applies as you progress into your third and then final year, so you are individually supported and guided in making your academic choices. Not all the course modules run each year. The list of Humanities course modules that are running in 2013-2014 have not yet been finalized, but following your compulsory modules there is a list of modules that have run in the past to give you a general idea of what might be offered.

We like to develop new course materials and are keen to know what areas are drawing students' interest. We also indicate other course modules within the Department of English and Humanities that are approved for study as part of our programme. These may include course modules on the BA Theatre Studies, BA English, or BA Creative Writing programmes. Some modules may have pre-requisites or particular requirements; please take this into account in planning your progress.

### Examples of Humanities option modules:

Avant Garde Revolt and Reaction: 1900-1950	Crowds and Power
Critically Queer	The Photographic
Back to the Future	The Cultural Production of Space
Literature and Cultural Identity	Romanticism
The Beat Generation	Modernism and the City

### Final Year Arts and Humanities Project

In your final year you will be required to submit a project. The Final Year Project is a longer piece of writing of approximately 8,000 words on a topic of your choice. The project allows you to explore your a topic in some depth. Usually people select a subject that has emerged from one or more of the course modules taken in the previous years, and often it draws upon the approaches and concerns of the different disciplines they have studied. You will be working under the supervision of a tutor, who will help you define the topic, bibliography, title, structure, and the key questions of your Project. Further details concerning projects will be issued at the appropriate time.

## School of Arts Course Options

In Years 1-4 (part-time) or 1-3 (full-time) you can choose from a wide range of courses run by the School of Arts. As indicated above, each year you will need to discuss your course choices with your personal tutor and have the approval of the Course Director, whose role it is to make sure that your choices add up to a coherent course of study. Feel free to browse on the School's webpages. Here are just a few of the many courses currently available to BA Arts and Humanities students\*:

### First year (Level 4):

- Introduction to Cinema

- Screenwriting
- The Press in Britain
- Television: History and Future
- Web Design and Development: Making the Web Work
- Introduction to Journalism
- Japanese Language 1 (beginners) or 2 (lower intermediate)
- Rethinking Japan: Introduction to Modern Japanese Society and Culture
- Introduction to Modern Art
- Introduction to European Art before 1800
- French Language 1 (beginners) or 2 (lower intermediate)
- Understanding Culture: Theories and Texts
- Imagining France: An Introduction to French Studies
- German Language 1 (beginners) or 2 (lower intermediate)
- Cultural Perspectives on German History
- Introduction to Spanish Culture and Society
- Spanish Language 1 (beginners) or 2 (lower intermediate)
- Portuguese Language 1 (beginners) or 2 (lower intermediate)
- Studying the Hispanic, Luso-Brazilian and Native American Worlds
- Writing London
- Reading Literature
- Critical Methods
- Critical Practice I: History
- Theatre Languages

**NB** part-time students will also take one Level 4 module in their second year

### **Year 2 and onwards (Levels 5 and 6)**

- Art and Society in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century
- Art and Society in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century
- Art in America since 1945
- Art and Empire of the Iberian World
- Blake
- Writing Fiction
- Fin de Siècle Vienna
- Photography and its Representations c.1840-1950
- Music and Image: Art and Music in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century
- French Cinema: History, Practice, Analysis

- Gothic Romance, 1764 to the Present
- Iberian Empires and the Early Modern World
- Digital Media Theory
- Cultural identity and the Media
- Media, Technology and Society
- Caribbean Literature
- Contemporary US Fiction
- Post-Colonial Literature
- Renaissance Philosophies and Renaissance Literature
- Sexuality and Modernity: Reading Across Cultures
- Shamanism in Literature and Film
- The Art of Medicine
- Victorian Novel
- Japanese Cinema History
- Contemporary Issues in Japanese Popular Culture
- Transformation, Transgression and Tradition: German Literature from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- Myth, Folk and Fairytales
- Film and Politics
- Luso-Brazilian Cultures
- Iberian Political Cultures: Approaches to Modern Portugal and Spain
- Curating and Preserving Digital and Dynamic Art
- Art, Globalisation and Politics
- 1960s Architecture and Design
- The 'American Century' and Beyond: US Literature and Culture from 1900

\* please note that module selections are subject to variation from year to year therefore not all of the above options may be available in a given academic year

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Who should I contact if I have problems with my application?

BA Arts and Humanities Programme Administrator  
School of Arts Office  
Department of English and Humanities  
Birkbeck, University of London  
Malet Street  
Bloomsbury, London  
WC1E 7HX

Esther Ranson  
Tel: 0203 073 8378  
Email: [englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk)  
[e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk)

## What teaching methods will be used?

As a BA Arts and Humanities student, you will experience a wide range of teaching methods and approaches. However the majority of teaching will probably take one of three forms: the lecture, the workshop and the seminar. Lectures normally involve relatively large groups of students listening to a formal presentation given by a member of academic staff. Workshops involve breaking a larger group into smaller subgroups and providing students with tasks or worksheets and specific questions on which they work and then report back. Seminars also involve a smaller group of students, and are designed to allow students to engage in active discussion of a chosen topic, under the direction of a tutor. In seminars students may be asked to do some preparatory reading, invited to join in a group discussion, or occasionally asked to give a short presentation to the rest of the group. Some seminars may involve audio-visual presentations, or an element of group work, and may include some degree of formal presentation by the lecturer. The approach to teaching methods will, of course, vary greatly from department to department, and from course to course.

## What happens if I can't attend classes?

All Birkbeck students lead complex lives, and as far as possible, we try to help you to accommodate the conflicting demands of family, work and study. Occasional absences are sometimes unavoidable and are always treated sympathetically by staff. However reasonable attendance is a requirement and failure to attend a substantial part of the taught course may have consequences in your final mark for that course unit. Please note that students should have attended at least 75% of a Course Module in order to be regarded as having completed that particular course.

## Will I be able to transfer credit for courses already completed?

If you wish to transfer to the BA Arts and Humanities programme from another certificate or degree programme in the College, or from a programme in another institution, it is possible that you may be able to transfer some credit from your previous studies. If you think you are eligible for credit transfer, please consult the BA Arts and Humanities Course Director, Dr Jo Winning ([j.winning@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:j.winning@bbk.ac.uk)).

## What about Libraries?

Birkbeck has its own well stocked library situated in the main building of the College in Malet Street. The College Library is particularly geared towards the courses that are

taught in the College, and you will find the staff particularly helpful in finding the materials needed for your studies. Birkbeck students are also, on payment of a small fee and for free in third and final year, entitled to use the University of London Library in Senate House (the large white building which dominates the Malet Street skyline). This will give you access to one of the finest libraries in the capital. Many of the books held here will not be found in the College Library. In addition to that, the College has reciprocal arrangements with many of the libraries in other colleges of the University of London, which will allow you to use some of the more specialised libraries in the area. Information on these, and on how to register with Senate House Library, is available in the College Library in Malet Street. You will be invited to induction sessions for both the college library and Senate House library at the beginning of the academic year.

### **Is there help with computers?**

The College's Central Computer Services Unit, located in the main building in Malet Street, provides good computer facilities for all students.

### **What happens if I hit financial or other difficulties?**

The College provides advice on possible sources of assistance for both part-time and full-time students, and maintains its own scheme of awards operated by the Scholarships Sub-Committee. In addition to that, there is a range of Government and College funding for which students experiencing financial hardship may apply, if eligible. Please contact the Student Financial Support for telephone advice or to make an appointment, on Tel: 020 7631 6362 between 12.00–5.00pm, Monday to Thursday or email: [studentfinancialsupport@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:studentfinancialsupport@bbk.ac.uk)

As well as an excellent environment for study, the College also provides a number of services and facilities which help to provide a lively and supportive context for students. These include:

- Evening nursery facilities
- Careers advice services
- Counselling services
- Common rooms, canteens and a bar - plenty of places to meet people
- Clubs and Societies (e.g. Literary Society, French Society, History of Art Society, Performing Arts Society etc)
- Its own sports ground for Football, Cricket, and Tennis
- We are next door to the University of London Students Union Building, with its excellent facilities, including swimming pool, gymnasium, squash courts, bars and shops.

For more information on these facilities see the College Prospectus and Student Union information pack.

### **What kind of Academic Advice and Support will I receive?**

#### **Programme Administrators:**

The Humanities Administrator is often the easiest person to contact by telephone. The Humanities Administrator will usually be able to give you practical advice and will always be able to point you in the right direction for further help.

#### **Personal Tutors:**

All first year BA Arts and Humanities students are allocated a Personal Tutor from among the academic staff. The Personal Tutor's role is largely pastoral. If you are



experiencing any personal difficulties, which are affecting your academic work (work pressure, family responsibilities, illness etc) it is important that you keep your Personal Tutor informed. The Personal Tutor will also be available to help you with course choices, the design of your degree, and any general issues about your experience of the course.

**Module Convenors/ Lecturers:**

If you are having difficulties with a particular module (for example, trouble meeting essay deadlines or attendance problems) or need advice on background reading or essay topics, often the person you need to speak to is the lecturer for that course, or, if there is more than one, the Module Convenor. His or her name will appear on the course documentation.

**Tutor for First Years:**

One member of academic staff is assigned to take special responsibility for first year students on the Humanities programmes.

**Course Director for Humanities:**

The Course Director is the member of academic staff who is responsible for the overall administration of the BA Arts and Humanities degree. Most problems should initially be directed to your Personal Tutor, although any major decisions regarding your course (i.e. requests to formally withdraw from the course, or arrange a break in studies) will need to be dealt with by the Course Director.

**BA Arts and Humanities Representatives in Departments of the School of Arts:**

There will also be members of academic staff from participating Departments in the School of Arts who have special responsibility for co-ordinating with the Humanities team in the Department of English and Humanities, and providing support for Arts and Humanities students studying subjects taught by staff in their Departments. The names of those tutors are listed at the back of this booklet.

To contact any of these members of staff, please see the list of telephone numbers at the back of this booklet or search the Birkbeck website for further contact details.

# Administrative Information for Year 1 Students

## Enrolment

After an offer of a place on the degree course, you need to enrol formally and pay the fees. You will be sent an email from Registry (Student Management) informing you of when you are eligible to enrol online from May 2013 onwards, but in case of problems you should contact the **My Birkbeck** helpdesk located in the Main Building (Malet Street). Upon enrolment you can request a College Membership card to enable you to make use of the College facilities. All contact details for the My Birkbeck centre are located in the back of this booklet.

## Fees/ Finance

College fees may be paid by many methods. Additional expenses will be incurred and it is important to budget for the purchase of books. Whilst we have great sympathy with students who find difficulties in paying their fees, the Course Director does not have the power to waive fees or sanction delays in payment. It is the Finance Office of the College that deals with fees and you should communicate and negotiate with them directly on 020 7631 6295. Students who fail to pay their fees may become ineligible to continue the course and to enter for assessment. Any student who has a debt to the College at the end of the year will not have their marks relayed to them. For further information about fees and/or financial support including student tuition fee loans from 2012 onwards, please see the links below:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/administration/money>

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/studentfinance>

## Change of Address

If during the year you change your address, contact telephone numbers or email address please inform the BA Arts and Humanities Administrator, Esther Ranson, on 0203 073 8378, [e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk). In addition to your administrator, you will also be required to change your personal details via your My Studies at Birkbeck Portal (student intranet).

**Failure to inform the Course Administrator or to change your information via your student portal will mean that you may miss important information concerning the course and examinations.**

## E-mail

It is a **requirement** that all Birkbeck students maintain their contact details for the entirety of their degree. All documentation, reading lists, class notices, etc will be sent via the Birkbeck e-mail system. You may nominate an email via your My Studies at Birkbeck Student Portal. If you encounter any difficulty with this process please visit the My Birkbeck Helpdesk in the main Malet Street building.

# Accommodation

Birkbeck does not have its own halls of residence. We have a limited quota of places in the University of London intercollegiate halls of residence (see below). There are however a diverse range of options open to you in finding student accommodation in London. If you are looking to rent accommodation, then the helpful **University of London Housing Services** should be your first point of contact:

University of London Union, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HY

Tel: 0207 862 8880

Email: [housing@lon.ac.uk](mailto:housing@lon.ac.uk)

You can use this service to seek help with finding accommodation or to obtain advice (including free legal advice) concerning housing. They also offer the following services:

- Short-term accommodation: you may be able to book temporary accommodation if you are having problems finding long-term housing.
- Advertising vacancies: If you own property, you can advertise your vacancies to other students via the Landlord Registration Scheme.

## Other accommodation help

Birkbeck has a limited quota of places reserved in the University of London intercollegiate halls of residence available to full-time students, with full-time international students being given priority. You should also try the following:

Ashwell House (female only)  
City YMCA London  
Goodenough College  
Homes For Students  
International Students' House  
London Hostels Association Ltd  
London Strategic Housing  
London Tourist Board  
Nansen Village (singles, couples and families)  
Netherhall House (male only)  
Nido Student Living  
Opal Property Group Student Halls  
UNITE

Further information and links to the above may be found at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/accommodation>

**Please note: much of the accommodation available in halls of residence is only open to full-time students.**

## International students

Students applying from countries outside of the European Union should contact the International Office as soon as possible for advice at: [international-office@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:international-office@bbk.ac.uk)

Helpful information for international students may be found on the Birkbeck website at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/guides/international>

For information about international student accommodation, please see the link below:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/international/accommodation>

# Induction Events

## (Autumn 2013)

Prior to beginning the course at Birkbeck, there are several courses on “Getting ready for University” which students may wish to avail themselves of:

- Study skills workshops for all new students
- Approaches to study module
- Careers Support
- Introduction and learning strategies module
- Learning strategies modules
- Learning styles
- Library skills
- Time management

For further information on all of the above please see the MyBirkbeck website at: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support>

Departmental induction for 2013 will be held during the first week of October in the evening and for BA Arts and Humanities students is normally on the first Wednesday of term between 6.00pm and 9.00pm.

Library Tours and IT Skills to introduce you to our virtual learning environments will also be arranged to take place in Induction Week. Details of these, and of the rooms for each induction session, will be posted on the Departmental website [www.bbk.ac.uk/eh](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/eh)

Induction activities are not compulsory but students are encouraged to participate as fully as possible. Students are, however, strongly advised to attend training in the College Virtual Learning Environment software “Moodle”.

We hope you enjoy the coming academic year, and continue to find the Birkbeck course stimulating and challenging.

# Student Support: Disability Statement, Learning Support and Student Awards

## Disability Statement for the Department of English and Humanities

At Birkbeck there are students with a wide range of disabilities including dyslexia, visual or hearing impairments, mobility difficulties, mental health needs, medical conditions, respiratory conditions. Many of them have benefited from the advice and support provided by the College's Disability Office.

## The Disability Office

The College has a Disability Office located in room G12 on the ground floor of the Malet Street building. We have a Disability Service Manager, Mark Pimm, and a Disability Advisor, John Muya.

Mark is your first point of referral for disability enquiries at the College whilst John is for dyslexia. They can provide advice and support on travel and parking, physical access, the Disabled Students Allowance, special equipment, personal support, examination arrangements etc. If you have a disability or dyslexia, we recommend you come to our drop in session where we can discuss support and make follow up appointments as necessary. The drop-in sessions are between 4pm and 6pm Monday to Friday.

The Disability Office can also complete an individual Student Support Agreement form with you, confirming your support requirements and send this to your School and relevant Departments at the College so they are informed of your needs.

## Access at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's main buildings have wheelchair access, accessible lifts and toilets, our reception desks have induction loops for people with hearing impairments and we have large print and tactile signage. Disabled parking, lockers, specialist seating in lectures and seminars and portable induction loops etc can all be arranged by the Disability Office.

## The Disabled Students' Allowance

UK and most EU students with disabilities on undergraduate and postgraduate courses are eligible to apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). The DSA usually provides **thousands of pounds worth of support** and all the evidence shows that students who receive it are more likely to complete their courses successfully. The Disability Office can provide further information on the DSA and can assist you in applying to Student Finance England for this support.

## The Personal Assistance Scheme

Some students need a personal assistant to provide support on their course, for example a note-taker, sign language interpreter, reader, personal assistant, disability mentor or dyslexia support tutor. Birkbeck uses a specialist agency to recruit Personal Assistants and they can assist you with recruiting, training and paying your personal assistant. Please contact the Disability Office for information on this scheme.

## Support in your Department

The provision which can be made for students with disabilities by Schools is set out in the Procedures for Students with Disabilities. This is available from the Disability Office and the Disability website (see below).

As mentioned above your Department will receive a copy of your Individual Student Support Agreement from the Disability Office. This will make specific recommendations about the support you should receive from the School. Whilst we anticipate that this support will be provided by the Programme Director, tutors and School Administrator, the Department of English and Humanities also has a Student Disability Liaison Officer, Dr Stephen Clucas. If you experience any difficulties or require additional support from the Department then she may also be able to assist you. He may be contacted on 0203 073 8421 or at: [s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk).

### **Support in IT Services and Library Services**

There is a comprehensive range of specialist equipment for students with disabilities in IT Services. This includes software packages for dyslexic students (e.g. ClaroRead and Inspiration), screen reading and character enhancing software for students with visual impairments, specialist scanning software, large monitors, ergonomic mice and keyboards, specialist orthopaedic chairs etc. For advice and assistance please contact Disability IT Support. There is also a range of specialist equipment in the Library including a CCTV reading machine for visually impaired students as well as specialist orthopaedic chairs and writing slopes. The Disability Office refers all students with disabilities to the Library Access Support service who provides a comprehensive range of services for students with disabilities.

### **Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia)**

Mature students who experienced problems at school are often unaware that these problems may result from their being dyslexic. Whilst dyslexia cannot be cured, you can learn strategies which make studying significantly easier. If you think you may be dyslexic you should contact the Disability Office who can screen you and where appropriate refer you to an Educational Psychologist for a dyslexia assessment. These assessments cost £215. Some students can receive assistance in meeting this cost from their employer. In exceptional cases students may receive assistance from the Access to Learning Fund.

### **Examinations**

Students with disabilities and dyslexia may be eligible for special arrangements for examinations e.g. extra time, use of a word processor, amanuensis, enlarged examination papers etc. In order to receive special arrangements a student must provide medical evidence of their disability (or an Educational Psychologists Report if you are dyslexic) to the Disability Office. For School examinations you should contact your Programme Director to request special arrangements at least two weeks before the examination. For main College summer examinations you are given the opportunity to declare that you require special provision on your assessment entry form. Students who require provision should then attend an appointment with the Disability Office to discuss and formalise the appropriate arrangements. The closing date for making special examination arrangements in College examinations is the 15<sup>th</sup> March and beyond this date consideration will only be given to emergency cases.

### **Further information**

Full information on disability support can be found at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/disability>

For further information or to make an appointment to see Mark or Steve, please call John Muya (Disability Advisor) on 020 7631 6336 or email [disability@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:disability@bbk.ac.uk).

Alternatively, you can go to the Disability Office in room G12 between 4pm and 6pm Monday-Friday.

# Study Skills and Learning Support

The Department of English and Humanities is conscious of the fact that many of our students have experienced an extended break from formal academic study and may need help with developing effective study habits and practices to maximise their enjoyment of their time in the Department. We are aware of the preference of many students for the opportunity of face-to-face help and advice. We provide a continually expanding programme of induction into the basic study skills of reading, listening, note-taking and essay-writing to academic standards.

## Study Skills Programmes

Every Department within the School of Arts has a provision for student support and the programmes vary as they are targeted at specific degree requirements. Please contact your administrator if you are having **any** difficulties in completing your coursework. There is help available to you at every point in your degree, and we are more than happy to point you in the right direction.

## Learning Support Tutor for the School of Arts, Dr Fleur Rothschild

As Learning Support Adviser, I will supplement the assistance offered by Departments in the School of Arts to students in their first year of study. Through a programme of workshops and short courses, I will provide additional guidance on how to enhance your study performance. In consultation with Subject Directors and Personal Tutors, I will extend advice and support to individual first-year students. I look forward to meeting and introducing myself to you at your Induction events.

## Get Ahead: Stay Ahead - Helping you get the best possible start to your course

At Birkbeck we want to make sure you get all the help you need to get your studies off to a great start and to provide you with support during your course. On the Get Ahead: Stay Ahead website you can access a range of online resources to help you:

- consider how you can achieve your goals
- find out what studying at Birkbeck is like
- improve your study skills and succeed on your course
- The online materials are interactive tutorials that are free to use and you can work through them at your own pace.

**[www.bbk.ac.uk/ahead](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/ahead)**

# Support Team Contact Details

**Mark Pimm**

*Disability Co-ordinator*

Room G12

Birkbeck College

Malet Street

London WC1E 7HX

Telephone: 0207 631 6315

Email: [m.pimm@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:m.pimm@bbk.ac.uk)

**John Muya**

*Disability Administrator*

Room G12

Birkbeck College

Malet Street

London WC1E 7HX

Telephone: 0207 631 6336

Email: [disability@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:disability@bbk.ac.uk)

**Dr Stephen Clucas**

*Disability Liaison Officer*

Department of English and Humanities

Telephone: 0203 073 8421

Email: [s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk)

**The Student Financial Support Office**

Birkbeck College

Malet Street

London WC1E 7HX

Telephone: 0207 631 6362

Email:

[studentfinancialsupport@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:studentfinancialsupport@bbk.ac.uk)

**Jackie Barnes**

*Examinations Officer*

Telephone: 0207 380 3030

[examinations@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:examinations@bbk.ac.uk)

**Lisa Mayer**

*Assistant Examinations Officer*

Telephone: 0207 380 3039

[l.mayer@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:l.mayer@bbk.ac.uk)

**President of the Student Union**

Telephone: 0207 631 6365

Email: [president@bcsu.bbk.ac.uk](mailto:president@bcsu.bbk.ac.uk)

Web address: [www.bbk.ac.uk/su](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/su)

**Dr Fleur Rothschild**

*Learning Support Tutor*

School of Arts

Room 210

43 Gordon Square

Telephone: 0203 073 8411

Email: [f.rothschild@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:f.rothschild@bbk.ac.uk)

**NB** most SU information is available on the website



## BA Arts and Humanities Academic Staff

Dr Heike Bauer	<a href="mailto:h.bauer@bbk.ac.uk">h.bauer@bbk.ac.uk</a>	020 3073 8386
Dr Carolyn Burdett	<a href="mailto:c.burdett@bbk.ac.uk">c.burdett@bbk.ac.uk</a>	020 3073 8416
Dr Luisa Calè	<a href="mailto:l.cale@bbk.ac.uk">l.cale@bbk.ac.uk</a>	020 3073 8412
Dr Stephen Clucas	<a href="mailto:s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk">s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk</a>	020 3073 8421
Prof. Esther Leslie	<a href="mailto:e.leslie@bbk.ac.uk">e.leslie@bbk.ac.uk</a>	020 3073 8401
Dr Mpalive Msiska	<a href="mailto:m.msiska@bbk.ac.uk">m.msiska@bbk.ac.uk</a>	020 3073 8402
Dr Laura Salisbury	<a href="mailto:l.salisbury@bbk.ac.uk">l.salisbury@bbk.ac.uk</a>	020 3073 8409
Dr Emily Senior	<a href="mailto:e.senior@bbk.ac.uk">e.senior@bbk.ac.uk</a>	0207 631 6100
Dr Jo Winning	<a href="mailto:j.winning@bbk.ac.uk">j.winning@bbk.ac.uk</a>	020 3073 8418
Prof. Sue Wiseman	<a href="mailto:s.wiseman@bbk.ac.uk">s.wiseman@bbk.ac.uk</a>	020 3073 8408

## BA Arts and Humanities Administrative Staff

<b>Esther Ranson</b> BA English & Humanities Administrator	<a href="mailto:e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk">e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk</a> <a href="mailto:englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk">englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk</a>	0203 073 8378
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## Academic Representatives from the School of Arts

Dr Suzannah Biernoff	Art History	0207 631 6137
Dr Joe Brooker	English	0203 073 8415
Dr Martin Shipway	French	0207 631 6177
Dr Silke Arnold-de Simine	German	0207 631 6150
Dr Michael Temple	Media & Cultural Studies	0207 631 6173
Dr Mari Paz Balibrea	Spanish	0207 631 6144
Dr Louise Owen	Theatre Studies	0203 073 8228

## School of Arts Administrators

Susan El-Ghoraiby	Art History	020 7631 6110	<a href="mailto:s.el-ghoraiby@bbk.ac.uk">s.el-ghoraiby@bbk.ac.uk</a>
Annmarie Shadie	Creative Writing	0203 073 8379	<a href="mailto:a.shadie@bbk.ac.uk">a.shadie@bbk.ac.uk</a>
Esther Ranson	English	0203 073 8378	<a href="mailto:e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk">e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk</a>
Rehana Miah	German, Spanish, French, Portuguese	020 7631 6113	<a href="mailto:culturesandlanguages@bbk.ac.uk">culturesandlanguages@bbk.ac.uk</a>
Rebecca Hung Han Yun	Japanese	0207 631 6170	<a href="mailto:culturesandlanguages@bbk.ac.uk">culturesandlanguages@bbk.ac.uk</a>
Isabel Perez	Media and Cultural Studies	020 7631 6667	<a href="mailto:culture@bbk.ac.uk">culture@bbk.ac.uk</a>
Esther Ranson	Theatre Studies	0203 073 8378	<a href="mailto:e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk">e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk</a>

## Contact Details for My Birkbeck

<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/">http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/</a>
<b>Online Enquiries</b>	<a href="http://www.bbk.ac.uk/ask/">http://www.bbk.ac.uk/ask/</a>
<b>Telephone Enquiries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monday to Thursday: 11am-6pm</li><li>• Friday 11am-5pm</li><li>• <b>Tel: 0207 631 6316</b> If calling from outside the UK: +44 (0)20 7631 6316</li></ul>
<b>Opening Hours (Malet Street Building, Torrington Square)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monday to Thursday: 11am-6:30pm</li><li>• Friday: 11am-5pm</li><li>• Saturday: 12pm-5pm</li></ul>