

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	BA Archaeology Minor exit award: – BA Archaeology with Environmental Studies (Level 6)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	Dip HE, Cert HE
Is the programme offered with a Foundation Year	Yes
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home school/other teaching departments	School of Historical Studies
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (3 years) / Part-time (4 years) / Full-time with Foundation Year (4 years) / Part-time with Foundation Year (6 years) / September
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	Archaeology
UCAS code	V400 , V401 (with FY)
Birkbeck Course Code	UUBAARCH_C (full-time, 3 years) UBAARCHY_C (part-time, 4 years) UUBFARCH_C (full-time with FY, 4 years) UBFARCHY_C (part-time with FY, 6 years)
HECoS Code	100299
Start date of programme	1996/97
Date of programme approval	1996/97
Date of last programme amendment approval	September 2025
Valid for academic entry year	2025-26
Date of last revision to document	01/09/2025

Admissions requirements

We welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential.

UCAS tariff: 112 (48 for Foundation Year entry)

The UCAS tariff score is applicable to you if you have recently studied a qualification that has a UCAS tariff equivalence. UCAS provides a [tariff calculator](#) for you to work out what your qualification is worth within the UCAS tariff.

Course aims

The BA in Archaeology will take you through a structured program designed to immerse you in the latest historical research on the ancient to contemporary past, and to train you as a skilled archaeologist.

Archaeology is not only about the materiality of how people lived, acted and thought in the past. It is also about how the past relates to the present. Developing an understanding of this relationship is a particular hallmark of the department's work and during your degree you will have the opportunity to explore the multiple ways in which archaeology shapes our contemporary world. In addition to the modules you take, you will be warmly invited to the vibrant, publicly facing programme of events organised by the department and its associated research centres. These provide further opportunities to meet others from across our diverse community, to see history in the making and to explore the ways in which it matters now. We begin from the premise that we have much to learn from each other and you will be encouraged to express your ideas in the supportive and respectful environment we have sought to foster.

Our expertise underpins our teaching. We are one of the very few history departments in the UK to include archaeologists, classicists and historians working on every period from prehistoric humans to Ancient Greece to medieval, early modern and modern societies. Our expertise encompasses much of the globe from Ancient Rome, medieval Armenia, modern China, India and Africa to Tudor London and Nazi Germany and more. In addition to pursuing interests in British, Irish, European and global history, and to exploring themes within histories of 'race', migration, gender and sexuality, students have the opportunity to take modules from allied disciplines like Politics and Geography.

The BA in Archaeology will take you through a structured programme designed to immerse you within the major themes which motivate material research of the ancient to contemporary past, and to train you as a skilled archaeologist. Your career prospects will be enhanced by developing the ability to formulate and communicate your own ideas effectively.

At each level along the journey to your degree, our curriculum combines hub modules geared to hone your skills with specialist options exploring the diverse worlds of the past. Hub skills will build from critical analysis, to collaborative discussion and debate, to deep research and writing of the dissertation. Every year, as you build your studies and progress towards your degree, you will take one of these modules, helping you to develop your own perspective on the past.

BA Archaeology with Foundation Year:

For the BA Archaeology with Foundation Year programme, the purpose of the Foundation Year is to prepare you for successful completion of your undergraduate degree. The Foundation Year

(one year FT or two years PT) provides the opportunity to explore your interests and build on your study skills, and on successful completion of the Foundation Year, you can progress onto year one of the PT or FT programmes. The curriculum for the 'with foundation year' programme after the completion of the foundation year modules is the same as the full-time or part-time BA programme. Students who successfully complete the versions of the degree programme 'with foundation year' are awarded the same final degree title as students on the full-time or part-time degree routes.

Environmental Studies Minor

Students can also choose to take an Environmental Studies Minor by selecting 90 credits of their options from the list of Environmental Studies modules (see below), with at least 60 credits taken at Level 5 or 6. Students who successfully complete 90 credits of Environmental studies options can achieve a final exit award of BA Archaeology with Environmental Studies.

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time - 3 years					
Year 1					
4	HICL200S4	Approaching the Past	30	Compulsory	T1-3
4		Option -see below	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
4	SSHC406S4	Discovering Archaeology	30	Compulsory	T2
4	SSHC525S4	Thames Through Time Fieldschool	30	Compulsory	T3
Year 2					
5	SSHC407S5	Exploring the Past	30	Compulsory	T1-3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
Year 3					
6	SSHC08D6	Writing the Past /Dissertation	60	Compulsory	T1-3
6		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
6		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
Part-time - 4 years					
Year 1					
4	HICL200S4	Approaching the Past	30	Compulsory	T1-3
4	SSHC406S4	Discovering Archaeology	30	Compulsory	T2
4	SSHC544S5	Thames Through Time Fieldschool	30	Compulsory	T3
Year 2					
4		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
Year 3					
5	SSHC407S5	Exploring the Past	30	Compulsory	T1-3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
6		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3

Year 4					
6	SSHC08D6	Writing the Past/ Dissertation	60	Compulsory	T1-3
6		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
Full-time with Foundation Year - 4 years					
Foundation Year (0)					
3	CASE002S3	Fundamentals of Study: Learning through the Global City	30	Core	T1
3	CASE001S3	Breaking Boundaries of Knowledge	30	Core	T2-3
3	SC03015S3	London: Places, Objects, Ideas	30	Core	T1
3	SSSS002S3	Contemporary Global Issues: Approaches in Social Science, History and Philosophy or Level 4 language module	30	Option	T2-3
Year 1					
4	HICL200S4	Approaching the Past	30	Compulsory	T1-3
4		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
4	SSHC406S4	Discovering Archaeology	30	Compulsory	T2
4	SSHC525S4	Thames Through Time Fieldschool	30	Compulsory	T3
Year 2					
5	SSHC407S5	Exploring the Past	30	Compulsory	T1-3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
Year 3					
6	SSHC08D6	Writing the Past /Dissertation	60	Compulsory	T1-3
6		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
6		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
Part-time with Foundation Year - 6 years					
Foundation Year (0a)					
3	CASE002S3	Fundamentals of Study: Learning through the Global City	30	Core	T1
3	CASE001S3	Breaking Boundaries of Knowledge	30	Core	T2-3
Foundation Year (0b)					
3	SC03015S3	London: Places, Objects, Ideas	30	Core	T1
3	SSSS002S3	Contemporary Global Issues: Approaches in Social Science, History and Philosophy or level 4 language module	30	Option	T2-3
Year 1					
4	HICL200S4	Approaching the Past	30	Compulsory	T1-3
4	SSHC406S4	Discovering Archaeology	30	Compulsory	T2
4	SSHC544S5	Thames Through Time Fieldschool	30	Compulsory	T3

Year 2					
4		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
Year 3					
5	SSHC407S5	Exploring the Past	30	Compulsory	T1-3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
6		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3
Year 4					
6	SSHC08D6	Writing the Past/ Dissertation	60	Compulsory	T1-3
6		Option	30	Option	T1, 2, or 3

Indicative list of options (main programme list)

Options for Level 4:

SSHC561S4 The Greek World
SSHC404S4 The Ancient World
SSHC409S4 The Medieval World: From Constantine to the Khans
SSHC419H4 The Early Modern World, 1500-1800: Reformations and Revolutions
SSHC411S4 The Modern World
SSHC412S4 The Contemporary World

Options for Level 5:

SSHC562S5 The Roman World
SSHC264S5 Field School: Buried Humanities 2
SSHC514S5 The Archaeology of a Greek Sanctuary
SSHC410S5 Journeys to the Underworld in Classical Literature and Culture
SSHC551S5 Palmyra and Dura-Europos: The Archaeology of Syria from Ancient Cities to Modern Destruction
SSHC547S5 People and their Things: Material Worlds from the Renaissance to Today

Options for Level 6:

HICL184S6 The Athenian Empire
HICL203S6 The Empire of Letters: Correspondence in the Roman World
HICL086S6 Late Medieval and Early Modern London: Community, Politics and Religion
SSHC493S6 Failed states? Ancient to Present in Europe, Asia and Africa
SSHC362S6 The Archaeology of Human Evolution
SSHC540S6 Stories in Stuff: the medieval and early modern worlds in 20 texts and objects

Note: 30 credits of options in each year of study can be a college-wide option in place of a department based option.

Environmental Studies Minor:

Indicative List of Environmental Studies options:

Level 4:

GGPH072S4 Humans and the Environment
GGPH055S4 Introducing Natural Environments
SSGE008S4 Introduction to Environmental Science

Level 5:

SSPL262S5 The Ethics of Life and Death: Humans, Animals and the Environment
 AREN199S5 The Arts of Adaptation: Creative Climates
 SSGE123S5 Future Food Systems and Sustainability
 SC03010S5 Global Environmental Histories
 LALW025H5 Environmental Law (15 credits)*
 GGPH071S5 Environmental Processes
 SSGE084S5 Managing Environments
 BUMN097H5 Sustainability and Stakeholder Marketing (15 credits)

Level 6:

SSGE125S6 Climate and Society: Past, Present and Future
 LALW035H6 Environmental Law (15 credits)*
 SSGE006S6 Race, Environment and International Development
 SSGE095S6 Global Nature Conservation
 EASC044H6 Geological Hazards (15 credits)
 BUMN126H6 Ethics and Sustainability in Food and Beverages (15 credits)
 AREN216S6 Performing Environments

*Environmental Law can only be taken at either level 5 or level 6, and should be paired with another 15 credit module from the environmental studies options list.
 (2 x 15 credit options can be taken in place of 1 x 30 credit option.)

Note: Options available may vary each academic year.

Core: Module must be taken and passed by student
Compulsory: Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)
Option: Student can choose to take this module

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.

From the outset, you will work with us to design a degree path which is tuned to your interests and goals, combining skills training with exploration of key themes in History. Teaching on this course is a combination of lectures and seminars. Lectures from our nationally top-ranking staff will introduce you to the critical ideas, debates and figures of the past, while seminars will train you in the construction of collaborative knowledge alongside the diverse community of your fellow students. Modules at all levels include the analysis of primary and secondary text sources, as well as images, material culture, music and film.

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.

Your degree award will be built from diverse forms of assessment—including source analyses, quizzes, oral presentations, take home exams, and research essays—across hub and option modules. These assessments are designed to build your skills cumulatively across the program. To complete the degree, you will design, research, and write 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 the Foundation year, you should be able to

- Articulate at a foundational level key concepts in some of the disciplines offered in social sciences, history and philosophy.
- Undertake academic reading, writing, research and assessment skills appropriate to the study of those disciplines
- Understand other key learning skills required for university-level study and know of how to access support at Birkbeck to develop these.

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

- Critically analyse narratives about the past and its role in the present across a range of contexts
- Understand and interrogate primary sources (from the past) and secondary sources (about the past) in discussion and writing
- Read and use historical and archaeological scholarship at a high academic level
- Discuss texts, objects and diverse media with a group of your peers
- Present your own research and arguments orally
- Design your own research questions and program of research
- Navigate archives, collections, oral history sources, and libraries
- Carry out research and writing at multiple scales: response essay, research essay, dissertation
- Engage with communities of historians, from academic workshops and conferences to public historians to your local community
- Design and create disseminations of your research in multiple forms, from article to podcast to public lecture

Careers and further study

A degree in Archaeology prepares you for any role which benefits from skills in research, communication and engagement. Graduates of our program work across professions and disciplines, from education to business, from museums and galleries to the heritage sector, social work and government.

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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