

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	BA Classical Studies Minor exit award: – BA Classical Studies with Environmental Studies (Level 6)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	Dip HE Classical Studies Cert HE Classical Studies
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	Classics and Ancient History
UCAS code	QQ67, QQ6R
Birkbeck Course Code	UUBACLSLSD_C (full-time, 3 years) UBACLSLSDS_C (part-time, 4 years) UUBFCLSLSD_C (full-time with FY, 4 years) UBFCLSLSDS_C (part-time with FY, 6 years)
HECoS Code	100300
Start date of programme	Pre 1980
Date of programme approval	Pre 1980
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

BA Classical Studies allows you to explore the culture, history, archaeology, philosophy and literature of the ancient Greek and Roman worlds. Choosing from a range of options, you can study Greek and Roman societies across the Mediterranean and Near East, from the Archaic period to the Roman imperial period and Late Antiquity, and the reception of classical culture in later periods of history.

You will be encouraged to engage in wider debate on how we interpret the classical world and why this matters. You will investigate both the admirable and the disturbing facets of Greek and Roman cultures, as we delve into:

- democracy
- slavery
- sexuality
- empire.

The nature of our knowledge about the past and the way in which histories and texts are written is a key concern. You will assess ancient source material (textual and archaeological) and question accepted histories and traditions about the past, so that you develop the ability to construct and present a convincing argument.

At Birkbeck we believe that the study of the classical world should be accessible to all. Many of our students have no prior knowledge of either Greek or Latin. As part of this classical studies degree, you will take at least one language option, and you will have the opportunity to develop your language skills over the duration of your degree, or use these skills to enrich your study of a wide range of complementary option modules across not only classics, but also including history, archaeology, politics and philosophy.

If you opt for the **Foundation Year** route, this will fully prepare you for undergraduate study. It is ideal if you are returning to study after a gap, or if you have not previously studied the relevant subjects, or if you didn't achieve the grades you need for a place on your chosen undergraduate degree.

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 available (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 Classical Studies 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	SSHC404S4	The Ancient World	30	Compulsory	T1
4		Language (Greek or Latin)	30	Compulsory	T1-3
4		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
Year 2					
5	SSHC407S5	Exploring the Past	30	Compulsory	T1-3
5		Language (Greek or Latin) or non-language option	30	Option	T1-3 T1, 2 or 3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
Year 3					
6	SSHC408D6	Writing the Past/Dissertation	60	Compulsory	T1-3
6		Language (Greek or Latin) or non-language option	30	Option	T1-3 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	SSHC404S4	The Ancient World	30	Compulsory	T1-2
4		Language (Greek or Latin)	30	Compulsory	T1-3
Year 2					
4		Language (Greek or Latin) or non-language option	30	Option	T1-3 T1, 2, 3
5		Option	30	Option	
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
Year 3					
5	SSHC407S5	Exploring the Past	30	Compulsory	T1
5		Language (Greek or Latin) or non-language option	30	Option	T1-3 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		Language (Greek or Latin) or non-language option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3

Full-time with Foundation Year - 4 years					
Foundation Year (0)					
3	CASE002S3	Fundamentals of Study	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	SSHC404S4	The Ancient World	30	Compulsory	T1-2
4		Language (Greek or Latin)	30	Compulsory	T1-3
4		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
Year 2					
5	SSHC407S5	Exploring the Past	30	Compulsory	T1-3
5		Language (Greek or Latin) or non-language option	30	Option	T1-3 T1, 2 or 3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
Year 3					
6	SSHC408D6	Writing the Past/Dissertation	60	Compulsory	T1-3
6		Language (Greek or Latin) or non-language option	30	Option	T1-3 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	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	SSHC404S4	The Ancient World	30	Compulsory	T1-2
4		Language (Greek or Latin)	30	Compulsory	T1-3

Year 2					
4		Language (Greek or Latin) or non-language option	30	Option	T1-3 T1, 2, 3
5		Option	30	Option	
5		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
Year 3					
5	SSHC407S5	Exploring the Past	30	Compulsory	T1
5		Language (Greek or Latin) or non-language option	30	Option	T1-3 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		Language (Greek or Latin) or non-language option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3

Indicative list of options

Level 4:

SSHC406S4 Discovering Archaeology
SSHC404S4: The Ancient World
SSHC525S4: Thames through Time
SSHC409S4: The Medieval World: From Constantine to the Khans
SSHC298S4 Introduction to Latin (Level 4)
SSHC299S4 Introduction to Ancient Greek (Level 4)

Level 5:

SSPL281S5 Ancient and Medieval Philosophy
SSHC487S5 Archaeology of Everyday Life
SSHC514S5 The Archaeology of a Greek Sanctuary
SSHC470S5 Greek and Roman Political Thought in Context
SSHC410S5 Journeys to the Underworld in Classical Literature and Culture
SSHC567S5 The World of Rome in London Museums
ARVC239S5 Art and Society in the Middle Ages and Renaissance
SSHC068S5 Introduction to Ancient Greek (Level 5)
SSHC067S5 Introduction to Latin (Level 5)
HICL077S5 Intermediate Latin
HICL074S5 Intermediate Ancient Greek

Level 6:

HICL184S6 The Athenian Empire
SSHC565S6 Exiles, Refugees and the Ancient World
SSHC566S6 Ruins. The Creation of the Past
HICL203S6 The Empire of Letters: Correspondence in the Roman World
ARVC208S6 Artistic Encounters in the Medieval Mediterranean
ARVC181S6 Art in Baroque Rome
FFHI318S6 Foundations of History
HICL003S6 Advanced Latin Language
HICL001S6 Advanced Greek Language
HICL165S6 Latin Set Book A
HICL205S6 Latin Set Book B
HICL185S5 Greek Set Book A
HICL202S6 Greek Set Book B

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 by 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.

Our position in a leading Department of History, Classics and Archaeology gives you the opportunity, unusual in UK Classical degrees, to study in depth the place of the ancient Mediterranean in world history, as well as its importance for contemporary political and social debates. At each level along your journey to 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.

How we will assess you

Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. Your degree award will be built from diverse forms of assessment—including source analyses, language exams, 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 the degree programme, 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 sources from the Classical past in translation, and discuss content as well as context
- Read and use historical 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 Classical Studies 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 to the arts, 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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