

Programme Specification

1	Awarding body	University of London				
2	Teaching Institution	Birkbeck College				
3	Programme Title(s)	BA Liberal Arts BA Liberal Arts with Foundation Year				
4	Programme Code(s)	UUBALIBE_C (3-year full-time) UBALIBER_C (4 year part-time) UBALIBED_C (6-year decelerated part-time) UUBALIBE_C (4-year full-time with Foundation Year) UBFLIBER_C (6-year part-time with Foundation Year)				
5	UCAS code	Y400; Y401 (with Foundation year)				
6	Home Department	English, Theatre and Creative Writing				
7	Exit Award(s)	Cert HE; Dip HE				
8	Duration of Study (number of years)	3 years full time; 4 years full time with foundation year; 4 years part time; 6 years decelerated				
9	Mode of Study	FT	X	PT	X	DL
10	Level of Award (FHEQ)	6				
11	Other teaching depts or institution	All Departments within the School of Arts; All Departments within School of Social Science, History & Philosophy; All Departments within School of Law				
12	Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details	N/A				
13	QAA Benchmark Statement	N/A				

14	Programme Rationale & Aims
	<p>For Foundation Year (year zero), see Foundation Year programme specification.</p> <p>Programme Rationale:</p> <p>In our complex and changing globalised world, knowledge and experience are seldom singular, monolithic entities. The BA Liberal Arts is a dynamic interdisciplinary undergraduate programme that offers students a unique opportunity to build a rich, intellectually-diverse degree that truly speaks to the interconnections and complexities of contemporary life.</p> <p>Constructed around a solid spine of core modules that help students develop the fundamental skills of critical reading, critical writing and an understanding of interdisciplinary inquiry, power and knowledge production, the programme opens out to an exciting and varied provision of subjects, including literature, theatre studies and creative writing, film and media, modern languages, art, history, geography, law and criminology, philosophy, politics and psychosocial studies. Based securely within English and Humanities, within the School of Arts, students will construct 50% of their programme from an expansive list of literary and culturally-orientated modules. Students can then choose 50% of their modules from the palette available across the School of Arts (History of Art, Cultures and Languages and Film,</p>

Media and Cultural Studies), the School of School of Social Science, History and Philosophy (Politics, Philosophy, Geography, Psychosocial Studies, History) and the School of Law (Law, Criminology). The culmination of learning and training across the different disciplines is the design and execution of an independent piece of research that is written up as a 7000-word Dissertation.

BA Liberal Arts equips its graduates with the adaptability, breadth of knowledge, depth of critical thinking and highly-developed communication skills that are greatly valued by a diverse range of employers in the contemporary world of work. Should they desire it, they will also be thoroughly equipped for further study at Masters level.

Programme Aims:

- Provide a cogent and stimulating introduction to the Liberal Arts as taught at Birkbeck in the School of Arts and, as appropriate, within the School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy and within the School of Law.
- Provide progression from the certificate of Higher Education in Literature to the School's
 MAs such as MA Cultural and Critical Studies and other programmes within the Department, the School and the College more widely. The Certificate in Literature has two modules designated as Arts and Humanities provision and some other modules may also appropriately prepare students for BA Liberal Arts.
- Enable students to develop their skills in academic writing and critical practice.
- Introduce students to diverse forms of representation and equip them with critical methods allowing them to analyse a range of visual, verbal and other texts.
- Enable students to write on the subject matter of the modules at length (and at gradually and progressively extended length) and in a range of academic, and, as appropriate, creative, genres.
- In doing so, offer students detailed academic advice, as close as possible to a 'tailor-made' approach in which consultation with an academic tutor enables students to balance the acquisition and development of skills in methods against more content-based and disciplinary emphasis leading to an end-designated award.
- Through the Liberal Arts pathway students will be offered critical studies. The carefully designed spine of Humanities modules encourages students to reflect on their approach; consider inter-and multi-disciplinary approaches and creative and critical writing.
- The spine of Liberal Arts modules provides intellectual coherence while also preparing students to move between disciplines.
- Provide students with a broad and balanced understanding of the practices of academic reading, research and writing.
- Enable students to develop skills in editing and revising their own writing.
- Enable students to consolidate learning through lecturer/peer feedback.
- Enable students to engage imaginatively in the analysis and interpretation of texts/cultures and methods of knowledge production and study.
- Develop students' independent critical judgement, helping them attain understanding of the histories, conventions, and processes of various genres and disciplines and to present lucid, logical, and well-structured work.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce well-rounded graduates ready to make a contribution to the cultural sector through independent critical and cultural practice, or to progress to postgraduate studies.
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15	<p>Entry Criteria</p> <p>For Foundation Year (year zero), see Foundation Year programme specification</p> <p>This programme adheres to the College Admissions Policy http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies/documents/admissions-policy.pdf</p> <p>Entry requirements UCAS tariff: 112-128 points. A-levels: BBC-ABB.</p> <p>The UCAS tariff score is applicable where applicants have recently studied a qualification that has a UCAS tariff equivalence.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Applicants are selected by application and may also be asked to provide a sample of written work or to attend an interview.</p> <p>Foundation Year Degrees: If students need extra support before starting an undergraduate degree, we offer a BA Liberal Arts with Foundation Year degree, which provides an extra year of supported study. This is an ideal route if for those returning to study after a gap, or if they have not previously studied this subject, or did not achieve the grades needed for a place on this degree. Once students successfully complete the Foundation Year, they will automatically advance onto the main degree.</p> <p>Alternative entry routes: Access to Higher Education Diploma with a minimum of 15 credits achieved at Merit or Distinction in social science or humanities units.</p> <p>A Certificate of Higher Education in Higher Education Introductory Studies can lead to exemption from Year 1 if students successfully complete designated modules to an appropriate standard.</p> <p>Applicants must successfully complete modules worth at least 120 credits before applying for direct entry into Year 2 of one of the BA degrees. Students interested in progressing to an undergraduate degree are encouraged to discuss their plans with the relevant admissions tutor.</p> <p>Successful completion of a Certificate of Higher Education in Journalism, Film and Media Studies, Media Practice or History of Art can reduce full-time BA degree studies at Birkbeck by up to one year.</p>
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16	<p>Learning Outcomes</p> <p>For Foundation Year (year zero), see Foundation Year programme specification.</p>
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By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Gain a richer knowledge of the field of Liberal Arts, both as represented within the School of Arts and also within the Schools of SSHP and Law where appropriate. An informed critical and creative approach to the subject area (All Core Courses).
2. Recognize, discuss, and write about forms and genres of texts, objects and epistemological frameworks (All Modules).
3. Through the Liberal Arts spine, apply interdisciplinary approaches to cultural objects (Level 4 and Level 5 Core Courses).
4. Through discipline-specific modules develop ability to write analytically on specific areas (All Level 5-6 Modules).
5. Reflect on the ways in which concepts have shaped culture and knowledge (All Modules).
6. Reconstruct the circulation of ideas across cultures and historical periods (All Modules)
7. Analyse and discuss the borders and divisions of knowledge through texts, objects, practices
(Storytelling: Narrative Archetypes, Forms and Techniques)
8. Situate an idea within a tradition of controversy and generate alternative views that have been or could be argued around it (Production of the Human: Decolonising the Canon)
9. Consider an object/artefact/document as evidence of historical activity and to situate and locate an object/artefact/document within its socio-cultural context (All Modules)
10. Understand and assess the role of experience and subjectivity in cultural analysis (Storytelling: Narrative Archetypes, Forms and Techniques; Production of the Human: Decolonising the Canon; Connecting the Arts)

By the end of the course, students will gain:

11. Knowledge and critical understanding from the various disciplinary frameworks they have encountered, as well as the ability to work across these disciplinary frameworks to produce interdisciplinary analyses (All Modules).
12. Confidence in knowing and applying methods appropriate to texts and cultural phenomena (All Core Courses).
13. Critical skills in the close reading and written analysis of visual, verbal and critical texts (All Modules).
14. The ability to choose appropriate subjects and to write about them, as well as the ability to edit, develop, and extend an analytical (and as appropriate creative) piece of work (All Modules).
15. Research skills, including the ability to gather, sift and organise material independently and critically and to present it in the form of an essay, report, presentation or creative piece (All Modules, but most specifically Storytelling: Narrative Archetypes, Forms and Techniques and Liberal Arts Dissertation).
16. The capacity to consider and solve complex problems in various kinds of speech, writing, and practice (All Modules).
17. Bibliographical skills including accurate citation of sources and consistent use of conventions in the presentation of scholarly work (All Modules).
18. Skills of self-evaluation, which will enable students to reflect on their own practice (All Modules).

17	<p>Learning, teaching and assessment methods</p> <p>For Foundation Year (year zero), see Foundation Year programme specification.</p> <p>Modules at Levels 4 and 5 are taught by lectures, seminars, and workshops. Modules at Level 6 are usually taught in seminar groups. Assessment includes essays and examinations, as well as a wide range of exercises designed to evaluate different abilities and prepare students to the range of genres, lengths, and writing skills required in the twenty-first-century workplace.</p>
18	<p>Programme Description</p> <p>For Foundation Year (year zero), see Foundation Year programme specification.</p> <p>In the first year of study, students will develop the fundamental skills of critical reading, critical writing and an understanding of interdisciplinary inquiry, power and knowledge production through two core modules, 'Storytelling: Narrative Archetypes, Forms and Techniques' and Production of the Human: Decolonising the Canon. Alongside these foundational modules, they will choose two other Level 4 modules from the variety of disciplines taught within the School of Arts and School of Social Science, History and Philosophy.</p> <p>At Level 5, the BA Liberal Arts Core 'Connecting the Arts' will build upon students' interdisciplinary skill-set by giving them a critical appreciation of the different arts and cultural production. In addition to taking another English & Humanities L5 module such as Narratives of the Body or Literature, Empire and Race, students will continue to pursue their learning in other disciplines within the School of Arts (including further English & Humanities options if they wish), School of Social Science, History and Philosophy and also within the School of Law.</p> <p>On reaching L6, students will choose one module from the varied period and themed module offered in English & Humanities, such as America Rewired: US Literature and Culture Since the 1960s or Literature and Visual Culture. They will continue their interdisciplinary explorations by taking two further modules offered across the School of Arts (again, including further English & Humanities options if they wish), School of Social Science, History and Philosophy and School of Law. As the intellectual capstone of their degree programme, in which they draw together their interdisciplinary training, they will produce a Final Year Dissertation on a research topic of their own devising.</p> <p>Level 4 (120 Credits):</p> <p>1 Core Module:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of the Human: Decolonising the Canon (30 Credits) <p>1 Compulsory Module:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storytelling: Narrative Archetypes, Forms and Techniques (30 Credits) <p>+ 60 Credits from BA English/BA Liberal Arts Options, OR other LEVEL 4 provision within the School of Arts, OR other LEVEL 4 provision within School of Social Sciences, History</p>

and Philosophy, OR Higher Education Introductory Studies (HEIS) Certificate, or other Cert HE in the School of Arts

Level 5 (120 Credits):

1 Core Module:

- ‘Connecting the Arts’ (30 Credits)
- + **1 option from BA English/BA Liberal Arts Options** (30 credits)
- + **2 options from other LEVEL 5 provision within the School of Arts (including BA English/BA Liberal Arts Options if desired) OR School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy OR School of Law** (for a total of 60 Credits)

Level 6 (120 credits):

- Liberal Arts Final Year Dissertation (30 Credits) –optional from 2024/5
- + **1 option from BA English/BA Liberal Arts Options** (30 credits)
- + **2 options from other LEVEL 6 provision within the School of Arts (including BA English/BA Liberal Arts Options if desired) OR School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy OR School of Law** (for a total of 60 Credits) **or 3 options** if Dissertation not taken

In summary:

The programme consists of 12 modules (30 credits each), of which:

- 3 BA Liberal Arts Core/compulsory taught modules (2x L4; 1x L5);
- 2 more units must be chosen from the modules offered by Dept of English Theatre and Creative Writing, L5-L6;
- Core L6 Final Year Dissertation, administered by Dept of English, Theatre and Creative Writing supervised by a subject specialist in the School of Arts.
- 6 modules (L4-L6) can be chosen from options within Schools of Arts, SSHP and Law

Progression:

90 Credits from Cert HE recognized

Where Core Level 4 Module taken as option on a certificate, the whole 120 credits are recognized.

Mode of Study:

Full Time

- Year 1: 4 X Level 4 modules (120 Credits)
- Year 2: 4 X Level 5 modules (120 Credits)
- Year 3: 4 X Level 6 modules (of which one is Final Year Dissertation) (120 Credits)

Part Time

- Year 1: 3 X Level 4 (90 credits)
- Year 2: 1 X Level 4 + 2 X Level 5 (90 credits)
- Year 3: 2 X Level 5 + 1 X Level 6 (90 credits)
- Year 4: 3 X Level 6 (of which one is the Final Year Dissertation) (90 credits)

6-year Part Time Decelerated

- Year 1: 2 Year 2: 2 Year 3: 2 Year 4: 2 Year 5: 2 Year 6: 2
- X Level 4 (60 credits)
- X Level 4 (60 credits)

	<p>X Level 5 (60 credits) X Level 5 (60 Credits) X Level 6 (60 Credits) X Level 6 (60 credits, of which one is the Final Year Dissertation) (60 Credits)</p>
	<p>Indicative lists of options</p> <p><i>Sample of English, Theatre and Creative Writing options</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing London • Reading Literature • Medieval and Renaissance Literatures • The Novel: Writing the Modern World • Tragedy • Romance • Telling the self • Poetry and Power: Text, Voice, Song • European Drama and Theatre: Gods, Ideas and Adaptations • Literature, Empire and Race • Eco-poetics • Flight Paths: Migration, Diaspora and Identity • Narratives of the Body • Medieval Realms • Making the Medieval Human • Shakespeare • Elizabethan and 17th Century Drama • Elizabethan and 17th Century Poetry • The Global 18th Century • Blake • Romanticism: Reason, Revolution, Imagination • Fin de Siècle • The Victorians and their World • Modernism and its Others • Post-war British Literature • Reading 21st Century Fictions • America Rewired: US Literature and Culture Since the 1960s • Literature and Visual Culture • Responding to Animals: Adam at the Zoo • Critically Queer • Finding a Leg to Stand On: Clinical, Critical and Creative Approaches to the Human Body [taught with St George’s Medical School] • Literature and Cultural Identity: Intersectionalities of Race, Class and Gender • The Cultural Production of Space • Science Fiction • American Centuries: Literatures of Slavery and Freedom

- Adaptations: Theories and Practices in Contemporary Performance
- Performing Theatre Histories (Critical Practice I)
- Theatre Languages
- Theories of Theatricality and Performance
- Poetry Workshop 1
- Poetry Workshop 2: The Open Page
- The Creative Critical Seam

Sample of History of Art options

- Art and Society Between 1900 and the Present
- Art and Society in the Nineteenth Century
- Art History: A Survey
- Debates in Art History
- Post-War Art and the Politics of Memory, From the 1960s to the Present
- The Immigrant Experience in Modern British Art

Sample of Languages and Cultures options

- French 1
- Japanese 1
- Reading Transnational Cultures
- Representations of Love, Desire and Sexuality
- Studying the Hispanic, Luso-Brazilian and Native American Worlds
- The Latin American Novel
- Understanding Culture: Language and Texts

Sample of Media and Cultural Studies options

- Cultural Identity and the Media
- Gender and Sexuality in Cinema
- Introduction to Cinema
- Media, Technology and Culture
- Memory and Media
- The Politics of Culture

Sample of Politics options

- British and comparative foreign policy analysis
- Capitalism and the Politics of Markets
- Challenges in Contemporary Politics
- Comparative Studies of Islamist Movements
- Contemporary British Politics
- Food, Politics and Society
- Governing by Numbers
- International Migration and Transnationalism
- Introduction to Global Politics
- Introduction to International Political Economy
- Politics and the Middle East
- Politics, Power and Human Nature
- Social and Political Theory
- Surveying Political Research
- The Politics of European Integration
- Transformations in Modern Politics: Democracy, Conflict and Globalisation

- War and Modern Society

Sample of Geography options

- Anthropology of Space Architecture and Landscape
- Critical Race Studies
- Culture and Development
- European Society, Economy and Geography
- Geographies of Revolt
- Globalisation in the Contemporary World
- Human Geography: Space and Place in the Contemporary World
- Material Culture, Consumption and the Construction of Self
- Social Inequalities and Diversities
- The Politics of Race and Diaspora

Sample of History, Classics & Archaeology options

- Discovering Archaeology: From Field to Finds Room
- The Ancient World
- The Archaeology of Greece and Rome
- The Contemporary World
- The Early Modern World, 1500-1750
- The Medieval World: From Constantine to the Khans
- The Modern World

- Archaeology of the everyday
- Beginnings: The Archaeology of Prehistory
- Between God and Rome: the Byzantine Empire 307-1453
- Britannia's Embrace: The British Empire and the World
- Building the Middle Ages: Urbanism and Architecture
- Contested Nation: Germany, 1871-1918
- Crossing Borders: Passports, Bodies and the State, 1600 to Today
- From Ancient to Medieval Societies, Third to Eleventh Centuries
- Greek and Roman Political Thought in Context
- Journeys to the Underworld in Classical Literature and Culture
- Political and Social Change in the Middle East since 1918
- The Reconstruction of Europe, 1945-1950
- Work and Play in Early Modern Britain

- Crime, Poverty and Protest in England and Beyond, 1500-1800
- Family, Society and Culture in Britain 1832-1918
- Late Medieval and Early Modern London: Community, Politics and Religion
- Literature, Culture and Society 1914-1945
- Sexuality, Society and the State in Britain, 1914-2000
- The Athenian Empire
- The Colonial Gaze: Western Perceptions of Asia, Africa and the Middle East, 1600-1960

¹⁹	Programme Structure			
Full-Time programme – 3 years				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	AREN257S4	Production of the Human: Decolonising the Canon	30	Core
4	AREN256S4	Storytelling: Narrative Archetypes, Forms & Techniques	30	Compulsory
4	Option	School of Arts or SSHP L4 option	30	Option
4	Option	School of Arts or SSHP L4 option	30	Option
Year 2				
5	AREN126S5	Connecting the Arts	30	Core
5	Option	English & Humanities L5 option	30	Option
5	Option	School of Arts, SSHP or Law L5 option	30	Option
5	Option	School of Arts, SSHP or Law L5 option	30	Option
Year 3				
6	Option	English & Humanities L6 Option	30	Option
6	Option	School of Arts, SSHP or L6 Law option	30	Option
6	Option	School of Arts, SSHP or L6 Law option	30	Option
6	AREN246S6	Liberal Arts Dissertation or L6 option	30	Option
Part-Time programme – 4 years				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	AREN257S4	Production of the Human: Decolonising the Canon	30	Core
4	AREN256S4	Storytelling: Narrative Archetypes, Forms & Techniques	30	Compulsory
4	Option	School of Arts or SSHP L4 option	30	Option
Year 2				
5	AREN126S5	Connecting the Arts	30	Core
5	Option	English & Humanities L5 option	30	Option
4	Option	School of Arts or SSHP L4 option	30	Option
Year 3				
5	Option	School of Arts, SSHP or Law L5 option	30	Option
5	Option	School of Arts, SSHP or Law L5 option	30	Option
6	Option	English & Humanities L6 option	30	Option
Year 4				
6	Option	School of Arts, SSHP or Law L6 option	30	Option
6	Option	School of Arts, SSHP or Law L6 option	30	Option
6	AREN246S6	Liberal Arts Dissertation or L6 option	30	Option

Part-Time programme (decelerated) - 6-years				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	AREN257S4	Production of the Human: Decolonising the Canon	30	Core
4	AREN256S4	Storytelling: Narrative Archetypes, Forms & Techniques	30	Compulsory
Year 2				
4	Option	School of Arts or SSHP L4 option	30	Option
4	Option	School of Arts or SSHP L4 option	30	Option
Year 3				
5	AREN126S5	Connecting the Arts	30	Core
5	Option	School of Arts, SSHP or Law L5 option	30	Option
Year 4				
5	Option	English & Humanities L5 option	30	Option
5	Option	School of Arts, SSHP or Law L5 option	30	Option
Year 5				
6	Option	English & Humanities L6 option	30	Option
6	Option	School of Arts, SSHP or Law L6 option	30	Option
Year 6				
6	Option	School of Arts, SSHP or Law L6 option	30	Option
6	AREN246S6	Liberal Arts Dissertation or L6 option	30	Option

Status*

CORE – Module must be taken and passed by student

COMPULSORY – Module must be taken, mark can be reviewed at sub-exam board

OPTIONAL – Student can choose to take this module

Note: the status of the dissertation module was changed to optional for students in their final year from 2024/5.

20	Programme Director	Dr Jo Winning (author of Programme Specification)
21	Start Date (<i>term/year</i>)	Autumn term 2020/21
22	Date approved by Education Committee	July 2019 (chair's action)
23	Date approved by Academic Board	Summer 2019
24	Date(s) updated/amended	November 2023 (<i>change to dissertation status</i>).

(Note: This programme replaces the BA Arts and Humanities.)