

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Awarding body/institution:	Queen Mary, University of London
Teaching institution (if different from above):	
Name of the final award and Programme title:	Masters of Arts (MA) London Studies
Duration of Study/Period of Registration	12 months FT/24 months PT
UCAS code:	n/a
QAA Benchmark Group	n/a
Academic Department/s involved in programme delivery	Geography, English, Politics

If accredited by a professional/statutory body, please give the name, date of last accreditation visit, approximate date of next visit and details of exemptions that will be given to QMUL graduates.	n/a
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### Criteria for admission to the programme

Normally an upper second class honours degree or higher in a humanities or social science subject (or equivalent international qualification) together with two supportive academic references. Candidates may be asked to provide examples of written work and/or be interviewed.

## Aims of the programme

The programme aims to:

- Provide an advanced understanding of different perspectives and approaches to understanding metropolitan urbanism and modernity;
- Consider, through the example of London, how urban cultures are experienced, represented and contested;
- Provide students with a sound conceptual base as well as suitable practical training to carry out research on London, introducing them to resources in the city as well as ways using them intelligently and creatively.

## Learning outcomes for the programme

Teaching and learning are closely informed by the active research of staff who teach on the programme. The programmes provide opportunities for students to achieve and demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

### *Knowledge and understanding*

The programme is designed to allow and encourage students to develop knowledge and understanding of:

- recent influential writing on cities and modernity, especially that which relates to London;
- the ways in which London acts as a centre of cultural production and identity formation;
- the ways in which metropolitan space is experienced, represented and contested.
- the geographical, historical and political processes inherent in the ways in which cities such as London have developed and changed.

### *Intellectual skills*

The programme is designed to allow students to develop competencies in:

- critical reading skills;
- oral and written communication skills;
- participation in discussion and develop arguments in a small group;
- working with a range of primary and secondary materials in order to study and understand metropolitan life;
- developing theoretical positions, identify research questions and devise methodological strategies in order to carry out independent research.
- critically interpreting data and text
- appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge
- taking responsibility for their own learning, and developing habits of reflection upon that learning

### *Discipline specific skills*

The programme is inter-disciplinary in collaboration with the Department Geography, the Department of Politics and the School of English and Drama. Drawing on these disciplines, the programme is designed to develop the following discipline-specific skills:

- planning, designing and executing a piece of advanced level rigorous research or enquiry, including project design, project planning, project management, and analytical and interpretive skills
- critically assessing interdisciplinary knowledge of cultural life in London both past and present relating to advanced theoretical ideas about cities, modernity and

metropolitan urbanism

- recognising the variety of different approaches to understanding metropolitan cultural life and their epistemological foundations
- working confidently and critically with, a range of different sources and materials for studying metropolitan cultural life
- developing advanced level knowledge of a range of London-based archives, libraries, museums and other repositories with collections relating to the cultural life of the city

#### *Key skills*

The programme will develop the following key skills

- learning and study
- advanced written communication
- advanced verbal presentation
- Information handling and retrieval (including, identifying, retrieving, sorting and exchanging information, drawn from a wide range of sources – including online databases, archives and other resources).
- Interpersonal working, including working with groups/teams and recognising and respecting the viewpoints of others

#### *Personal attributes and social skills*

In addition, the programme fosters the development of a range of personal attributes important for the world beyond higher education: for employment, for future personal intellectual development and in order to contribute to the wider community. These include heightened motivation, dedication, the ability to work autonomously and with others, critical self-awareness and self-management, empathy and insight, intellectual integrity, initiative and personal responsibility, interest in life-long learning, flexibility, adaptability and creativity.

## **Teaching, learning and assessment strategies**

This interdisciplinary programme is taught by members of academic staff in the Department of Geography, the Department of Politics and the School of English and Drama with Geography taking the lead. As a result, the programme is taught in accordance with the Department of Geography's Teaching and Learning Strategy. The Department of Geography is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting excellence in teaching and learning, to innovation in teaching practice, and to fostering independent learning and critical thinking in our students, whilst providing appropriate levels of support to students in their learning.

The majority of teaching and learning takes place through:

- small group, participatory seminars with a member of academic staff who has research expertise in the module's subject area. Sessions will normally be based around the discussion of pre-circulated readings, where students will have the opportunity to shape the direction and content of debate. Indeed, seminars will offer students an open, democratic, flexible and supportive learning environment.

These are supplemented by a range of other teaching methods including:

- site visits (to museums and archives)
- field walks
- student-led conference presentations

There is also a substantial component of private study and reading.

Learning will be supported by:

- Coherently designed and effectively delivered modules
- Detailed module handbooks, providing learning outcomes and guided reading for each module, identifying the structure and pathway of each module and defining

'essential reading' and 'further reading'.

- The provision of key materials in libraries or through electronic resources
- Individual feedback on written work
- Appropriate assessment exercises within each module
- Use of electronic teaching materials including Powerpoint, Blackboard and online reading lists
- Encouraging active participation by students in small group discussions
- Research methods training
- Appropriate use of AV teaching technologies

Students have access to a wide range of learning resources within the College. These include: the College Library, the University of London Library at Senate House and the first rate resources of other libraries with London collections (e.g. the British Library, the Bishopsgate Institute); a range of IT resources including networked PCs (with full internet and email privileges), and electronic learning resources (e.g. electronic academic journals); the Graduate School in the Social Sciences and Humanities, including the facilities of the 'Lock Keeper's Cottage' in the Campus's 'Arts Quarter' bordering the Regent's Canal (seminar room, a common room with kitchen facilities and three work rooms with additional computing resources).

All students are allocated a supervisor with whom they will meet on a regular, one-to-one basis throughout the programme. Supervisors will have expertise in the student's proposed area of dissertation research and may be drawn from any of the three collaborating Departments in the programme. Each student will receive individual supervisions, lasting at least 30 minutes, four times each semester and four times in the summer term and vacation. While primarily supporting the student in his or her dissertation research, the supervisor will also provide more general academic help, guidance and feedback. A 'Supervision Record Sheet' will be completed after each meeting and the student and supervisor will jointly fill in a 'Progress Report' at the end of each semester, identifying key achievements as well as any problems that need resolving.

Aside from the 15,000 word dissertation, assessments in most other modules will take the form of extended essays (usually of between 4,000 and 5,000 words).

Assessment will take a number of forms within the programme. Forms of assessment include:

- 15,000 word dissertation
- dissertation proposal to be presented at a student conference day
- extended essays (usually of between 4,000 and 5,000 words). Seeking the approval of the module convenor, the exact focus of the essay will often be determined by the student's own module-related interests.
- Formative feedback on drafts of assessed essays will be provided in certain modules via a student conference day.
- There will be no examinations.

## **Programme structure(s) and requirements, levels and modules**

The programme is structured around a set of compulsory modules and a range of optional modules.

The programme is made up of modules totalling 180 credits. Students registering for an MA London Studies must take the compulsory module *Cities, Empire and Modernity* (30 credits) and complete a 15,000 word *Dissertation* (Mode C, 60 credits, core). They must also complete a programme of non-assessed research training drawn from modules taught by the School of English and Drama and the Department of Geography\*. They can then choose three specialist modules from the following: *Art, Performance and the City* (30 credits), *Sociability, Literature and the City* (30 credits), *Metropolitans, 1770-1820: British Women Writers in London and Paris* (30 credits) *Health, Housing and the Education of Immigrants in a Metropolitan Environment* (30 credits), or *Empire Race and Immigration* (30 credits). In

place of one of these option modules (and with the approval of the programme convenor and the relevant module convenor), they are also permitted to select up to one 30 credits module from elsewhere in the Humanities and Social Sciences Sector. London Studies students might potentially be interested in *Modernism and After* (offered by the School of English and Drama, which further considers debates about modernity) and *Theories and Typologies II* (offered by the Department of Politics, which explores the social, political and cultural implications of migrant settlement in Britain and Europe). Part time students will normally undertake the research training in the first year of their study along with the compulsory module (Cities, Empire and Modernity) and two option modules. In their second year they will register for the dissertation module and one other option module (although it is likely that they will commence work on their dissertation during the first year of study).

\* This will be comprised from elements of *Social Science Research Methods and Methodologies* (taught jointly by the Departments of Geography at Queen Mary, University of London and University College London) and *London Panoramas: Sources and Archives for Researching London* (taught by the School of English and Drama at Queen Mary, University of London), tailored to meet the students' specific training needs.

The pass mark for each unit of assessment, each module and for the dissertation is 50%. A mark of 70% or above is a distinction. Candidates must pass ALL modules to be awarded the MA. One failed module may be condoned at the discretion of the MA London Studies Examination Board if the failure is considered of a marginal nature (a mark of between 40% and 49%).

A candidate for the Masters degree who achieves an average mark of 70% over all elements of the programme, and a mark of at least 65% in the dissertation, may be recommended for the award of the degree with Distinction. A candidate for the Master's Degree who achieves an average of 65% or above over the whole programme of study may be recommended for the award of the degree with Merit.

<b>GEG7107</b> <b>Dissertation (15,000 words)</b> <b>(Core Module)</b> <b>60 credits</b>	<b>GEG7102</b> Art, Performance and the City 30 credits
<b>GEG7105</b> <b>Cities, Empire and Modernity</b> <b>(Compulsory Module)</b> <b>30 credits</b>	<b>GEG7109</b> Empire Race and Immigration 30 credits
	<b>WASM019</b> Sociability, Literature and the City 30 Credits
	<b>WASM022</b> Metro-intellectuals, 1770-1820: British Women Writers in London and Paris 30 Credits
	<b>POLM007</b> Health, Housing and the Education of Immigrants in a Metropolitan Environment 30 credits
	<b>LCMM052</b> Writing the East End 30 Credits
	<b>RENM032</b> Urban Culture and the Book 30 Credits

**Quality assurance mechanism (please include details of: SSLC meetings, student feedback mechanisms, personal tutor arrangements, programme induction, programme review and monitoring.)**

**Programme Review and Management** will be undertaken as and when necessary under the direction of the MA/MSc Director and the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Departmental Quality Enhancement Committee. A module and programme evaluation system is also undertaken whereby students can feedback their experiences and report any problems. In addition, an opportunity for students to meet with the programme's external examiner at the end of the degree to discuss their experiences is provided

**Programme convenor arrangements** are overseen by the MA/MSC director. The Programme convenor is responsible for the overall running of the MA. They will hold one-to-one individual meetings with students during induction week to assist in selecting modules, and allocating a supervisor. The Programme Convenor is the first person for students to consult in relation to queries about the structure of the programme. They also act as a point of liaison between the student and other members of staff and between the students and the College (in relation to registration etc). The Programme Convenor is the first person to be consulted if illness or other problems result in difficulties in meeting coursework deadlines. If the problem escalates then the MA/MSc Director will be consulted. All complaints about the programme are raised first with the Programme Convenor. If these cannot be resolved the issue will be raised with the MA/MSc Director who may contact the Head of Department or the College Academic registrar. A guide for masters students is provided as a hard copy during the induction day and it is also available online at <http://www.geog.qmul.ac.uk/docs/4616.pdf>

Comprehensive **programme induction** is delivered via an induction day in the Department of Geography that is provided for all incoming students during induction week (the week before formal teaching commences). This is used as an opportunity to acquaint new students with the format of the programme and expectations of them. Students also receive a library induction. All students meet with the programme Convenor during this week to talk about module selection and how to manage the enrolment process. Students with special educational needs have the opportunity to talk to their adviser about how the College can best support them, and to agree with the students how to communicate those needs to appropriate members of staff.

**The student mentor scheme** involves new MA students being assigned a postgraduate mentor from the Graduate School. This will be a fellow student who can help with information and advice about the department and the experience of being a postgraduate.

**Graduate School Committee** provides a formal means of communication and discussion between the Department and its postgraduate students. The committee consists of postgraduate student representatives together with some members of staff (including the Director of Graduate Studies, the MA/MSc Director and programme convenors). There are elections for postgraduate members at the start of each academic year. It is designed to respond to the needs of students and meets regularly throughout the year. Matters raised in this committee are reported to the rest of the Department's staff (via the Teaching and Learning Committee, the Departmental Quality Enhancement Committee or the Departmental Meeting) so that they can take action as appropriate.

### **Employers Links**

**Please provide details of any links with employers e.g.**

- **Details of advisory panels that include current or potential employers;**

- **Organisations that regularly employ graduates from this programme and the roles that graduates undertake.**
- **Student prizes donated by organisations that may offer employment to graduates from this programme.**

**If there are no links with employers consider the learning outcomes and transferable skills and explain how these might be used to inform employers about the qualities and skills a graduate from this programme might be expected to have.**

The programme provides a deep understanding of key aspects of the cultural history and contemporary cultural life of London as well as developing a range of advanced analytical and research skills. This knowledge and experience will have considerably transferable value in the labour market. However, graduates would be especially well equipped to pursue careers in the metropolitan arts and cultural sectors. It is also envisaged that the research training offered by the programme would provide a suitable basis for undertaking PhD research and, therefore, as a stepping stone to an academic career.

**Graduate skills and qualities**

In terms of transferable knowledge and skills, an MA London Studies graduate will:

- have a detailed, interdisciplinary knowledge of cultural life in London and be able to work with advanced theoretical ideas relating to cities and metropolitan urbanism
- be familiar with, and work confidently and critically with, a range of different sources and materials for studying metropolitan cultural life
- have knowledge of a range of London-based archives, libraries, museums and other repositories with collections relating to the cultural life of the city
- have a range of advanced level research skills including: project design, project planning, project management, and analytical and interpretive skills
- be a confident oral and written academic communicator
- be a confident independent learner, thinker and worker
- be able to work in a group situation, showing empathy and sensitivity for the views of others, but with the ability to interact confidently and persuasively

<b>Person Completing Programme Specification</b>	Dr Cathy McIlwaine (MA/MSc Director)
<b>Person responsible for management of programme</b>	Dr Alastair Owens (Programme Convenor)
<b>Date programme specification agreed by Department or teaching and learning committee</b>	16 November 2009
<b>Date of approval by Faculty Board/SMD Education Board</b>	
<b>Date of update/amendment</b>	