



LEEDS
BECKETT
UNIVERSITY

Course Specification

MA Modern and Contemporary History

Course Code: MMCOH

2026/27

leedsbeckett.ac.uk

MA Modern and Contemporary History (MMCOH)

Applicant Facing Course Specification for 2026/27 Entrants

Confirmed at 10/2025

General Information

Award	Master of Arts Modern and Contemporary History
Contained awards	Post Graduate Certificate Modern and Contemporary History Post Graduate Diploma Modern and Contemporary History
Awarding body	Leeds Beckett University
Level of qualification and credits	Level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, with 180 credit points at Level 7 of the Higher Education Credit Framework for England.
Course lengths and standard timescales	Start dates will be notified to students via their offer letter. The length and mode of delivery of the course is: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12 months (full time, campus based)• 24 months (part time, campus based)
Part time study	PT delivery is usually at half the intensity of the FT equivalent course, although there may be flexibility to increase your pace of study to shorten the overall course duration. PT students will be supported by the course team to determine an appropriate selection of modules from the level for each year of study. Some modules may be delivered in a different sequence from that defined within this information set but the modules offered within each level are consistent. Please note that a work placement option is not generally available to PT students.
Location(s) of delivery	The majority of teaching will be at City campus but on occasion may be at Headingley campus.
Entry requirements	Admissions criteria are confirmed in your offer letter. Details of how the University recognises prior learning and supports credit transfer are located here: https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/student-information/course-information/recognition-of-prior-learning/ Admissions enquiries may be directed to: AdmissionsEnquiries@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Course fees

Course fees are confirmed in your offer letter. A breakdown of any additional costs is included on the online prospectus entry for this course.

Fees enquiries may be directed to Fees@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Policies, Standards and Regulations

<https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/our-university/public-information/academic-regulations/>

Standard regulations apply to this course.

Professional Accreditation or Recognition Associated with the Course**Professional body**

N/A

Accreditation/recognition summary

N/A

Timetable

Timetables for Semester 1 will be made available to students during induction week via:

- i) The Student Portal (MyBeckett)
- ii) The Leeds Beckett app

Any difficulties relating to timetabled sessions may be discussed with your Course Administrator.

Key Contacts**Your course director**

Dr Rachel Rich
r.rich@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Your Academic Advisor

Dr Kelly Hignett
k.l.hignett@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Your course administrator

The name of your Course Administrator/s will be confirmed during induction. Their contact details are:
HistoryAdmin@Leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Course Overview

Aims

The aims of the programme are to:

- a) Develop an understanding of contemporary approaches to the study of modern and contemporary history;
- b) Encourage critical engagement with theories, concepts, debates and interpretations in the field of modern and contemporary history;
- c) Develop knowledge of major themes and developments in history since 1750;
- d) Support the evaluation and application of a range of current methods and methodologies for historical research;
- e) Develop critical awareness of the variety of sources available, including archive sources and electronic sources and their appropriateness for specific types of historical study;
- f) Develop intellectual independence and undertake independent study.

Course learning outcomes

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1	possess a systematic understanding of a body of historical knowledge, and a critical awareness of historical trends, processes and events;
2	appreciate and utilise comparative approaches, frameworks, methods and historical interpretations which reflect a range of history specialisms;
3	identify and evaluate appropriate questions, sources and methods for historical investigation; primary sources include not only textual sources but also visual and material evidence; ¹
4	critically engage with and apply the theoretical underpinnings and intellectual standing of history as a discipline and, where appropriate, demonstrate knowledge of cross-disciplinary influences and approaches;
5	effectively articulate ideas and participate in discussions and construct cogent and persuasive arguments both orally and in written form, supported by appropriate critical vocabularies and confident handling of scholarly referencing;
6	demonstrate intellectual independence, self-direction, appropriate research techniques and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act independently in planning, designing and implementing research, particularly in a sustained dissertation project.

¹ History is a discipline in which a very wide variety of sources might come into play; from written documents (printed and published or handwritten and private); to visual sources – paintings (landscapes, portraits, cityscapes, genre painting), political cartoons, adverts, sketches, postcards, photographs, maps; to databases (electronic) and archives (usually paper-based, but increasingly digital). Our programme aims to expose our students to the variety of source material and to train them in its evaluation, interpretation and other uses.

Teaching and Learning Activities

Summary

Teaching will be delivered in person. Additional learning resources will also be provided online via our Virtual Learning Environment.

Sessions will include a variety of learning activities including document analysis; seminar discussion based on close reading; presentations; tutor-led introductory lectures; debate and group work. Teaching and learning methods, therefore, aim to enhance collaborative and group skills, as well as the abilities and initiative of the individual scholar. The course team recognises that a significant part of learning takes place outside taught sessions, in study undertaken by students individually and in groups. Each week students are expected to undertake directed reading and to engage in directed tasks, such as book searches and primary source analysis. The move to increasing levels of student independence is modified as the course progresses, with significant levels of support in 'Researching Cultures', in order to build up students' knowledge and confidence, and proportionately less in the Dissertation, when students are expected to demonstrate a substantial degree of personal initiative and decision-making.

Teaching is delivered in two 12-week semesters. Students study three 20 Credit modules (or equivalent) in each semester. Dissertation skills are discussed and developed in the core semester two module Making Histories. At the end of the module students are assigned a supervisor and work independently on their dissertation over the summer. Students are also expected to do independent reading, research and preparation related to the modules they are studying.

Students are provided with guidance on the best ways to engage with all modes of teaching and learning, along with support to assist acquisition of academic knowledge and associated development of high-level skills. Engagement with each module studied during both semesters is expected, and students will encounter varied forms of assessment that are designed to demonstrate their academic progress.

Your Modules

This information is correct for students progressing through the programme within standard timescales. Part-time students will be supported by the course team to determine an appropriate selection of modules from the level for each year of study. Option modules listed are indicative of a typical year. There may be some variance in the availability of option modules. Students who are required to undertake repeat study may be taught alternate modules which meet the overall course learning outcomes. Details of module delivery will be provided in your timetable.

Compulsory modules

Module title	Credits	Semester/ teaching period
Researching Cultures	20	1
Making Histories	20	2
Students choose either:		
Dissertation OR	60	Over the summer

MA Modern and Contemporary History Major Project	60	Over the summer
*The Modules will include <i>four</i> of the following with two in each Semester:		
All Consuming: Researching Eighteenth Century Material Culture	20	
Cultures of Confinement: The United States, 1800-2020	20	
Documents of Life: Debates and Controversies	20	
European Cities: Making Urban Landscapes and Cultures since c.1945	20	
Histories of Fame: From Byron to Beyonce and beyond	20	
Field to Fork: Food History in a Global World	20	
Journeys and Discoveries: Travel, tourism and exploration 1750-2020	20	
Organised Crime in the Modern World: Global Criminal Cultures	20	
Real Men? British Masculinities, c.1850-2000	20	
Rethinking the Past: Definitions, Concepts and Approaches to Public History	20	
Great Britain and the Italian Question	20	
Useable Pasts	20	
Number of credits of compulsory modules	180	

***These modules rotate on an annual basis. Not all modules listed may be available in your year of entry.**

Assessment and Scheduled Learning and Teaching Activities

The assessment balance and overall workload associated with this course are calculated from core modules and typical option module choices undertaken by students on the course. They have been reviewed and confirmed as representative by the Course Director, but applicants should note that the specific option choices students make may influence both assessment and workload balance.

A standard module equates to 200 notional learning hours, which may be comprised of teaching, learning and assessment, any embedded placement activities and independent study. Modules may have more than one component of assessment.

Assessment

This course contains a mixture of coursework assessments and an extended dissertation project. Each module has a single point of assessment and we work with students to manage their time effectively. As this is a postgraduate course, it is essential that you develop your core academic skills through researching for and writing essays. These are skills which you will extend and deepen in the writing of your MA dissertation proposal and dissertation. These skills are complemented by those developed in other forms of assessment which can include presentations, research posters, and other writing tasks.

Workload

Your work for the MA Modern and Contemporary History will be made up of a large number of hours of independent study outside the classroom. Classroom hours will support and guide your learning, with much of the content of classroom discussion coming from the reading you will be expected to do in

preparation. There are no work placements on this course, but students wishing to look for relevant work experience are encouraged to do so, and will be supported by our careers advisor in looking for opportunities.

Overall Workload	Level 7
Teaching, learning and assessment	130 hours
Independent study	1670 hours
Placement	-