



# **Studying History at Durham**

**June 2023**

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**Every university offers something different.  
You have to choose which university is right  
for you.**

# The History Department

43-46 North Bailey and Cosin's Hall (Palace Green)

Ranked #3 in the UK for History (Complete University Guide, 2023)



**Breadth and depth:  
range of options and  
ability to specialise**

**Progression and  
independence**



# Progression

First year is 'preliminary'

Degree classification: 40% from second year marks; 60% from third year marks

Fewer, more intensive, contact hours by third year

**Assessment:** coursework and exams;  
coursework predominating

# Ways of studying History at Durham

## Single Honours (V100)

### Joint Honours

- Classics
- English
- Modern Languages and Cultures

### Combined Honours

- Liberal Arts
- Combined Social Sciences

# Single Honours First Year

1 Core Module:  
Making History  
(double  
weighted)

4 Option Modules

Making history is taught by 'strands'  
Examples from previous years include:

- 'Queen Elizabeth I'
- 'Boxer Rebellions and Foreign Devils in Qing China, 1900-1901'
- 'Radicalism in Early Victorian Britain'
- 'Europe and the Islamic World'

1 x Medieval, 1 x Early Modern, 2 x Modern Up to 2  
modules in other departments

Examples from previous years include:

- 'Decline and Crisis? Europe 1300-1500'
- 'The Atlantic Archipelago, 1500-1750'
- 'The Rise and Fall of American Slavery'
- 'Power in Africa, 1800 to the present'

# 'Making History' Strand: American Nativism

- Central paradox in US history
- Centred on John Higham's *Strangers in the Land*
- Claims, evidence, narrative
- How it was received in the 1950s, 1980s, 2010s
- Looking at evidence directly





# Level 1 Option Module: Power in Africa

- Sub-Saharan Africa: manmade and natural disasters or human resilience and resistance?
- Partition of Africa and colonial rule
- Decolonization
- African initiatives and responses

## Sample essay questions:

- Was medicine a tool of empire?
- Were young Africans drawn to the city to escape the traditions of the village?



# Single Honours Second Year

1 Core Module:  
Conversations  
with History  
(doubled weighted)

4 Option Modules

Examples from the current year include:

- 'Nature and Power in East Asian History'
- 'Politics and Reform in America, 1877-1914'
- 'Demythologising the Weimar Republic'
- 'Sport in History'

2 modules in first and second term

Examples from previous years include:

- 'Inventing France, 1300-1500'
- 'Modern China's Transformations'
- 'Black British History'
- 'International Human Rights since 1945'

# Level 2 Option Modules in 2022/23

## Medieval

Law and Order in the Barbarian Kingdoms  
Medieval Islamic World  
Cross-cultural Iberia: identity and diversity  
The Book of Hours in Medieval Life and Art  
Inventing France, 1300-1500  
Socialising the Household in Medieval Cities  
New L2- Late Medieval

## Modern European

Hard Times: British Society, 1815-1902  
Oral History  
Living the French Revolution and Napoleonic Empire  
Black British History  
Memory and Conflict in Europe since 1918  
Photographic Histories  
Gender and Sexuality during Britain's Long Twentieth Century  
Occupied Europe (1938-1947)

## Early Modern

The Court: Art and Power in Early Modern Europe  
The Early Modern Western Indian Ocean  
New Early Modern South Asia Module  
The "Vast" Early Modern Americas  
The World We Have Lost? Family and Household  
Early Modern Hospitality in Global Perspective  
Regions and Peoples in the Atlantic Isles and North America

## Modern Global

Modern China's Transformations  
International Human Rights Since 1945  
Political Culture in Japan since 1688  
Wildlife Conservation in African History  
Elders, Despots and Modernisers in North East Africa  
New Economic History Module (Late Modern)  
Food and Culinary History of Southern Africa  
The United States and the Cold War Science  
China, The West and The Rest  
Native Americans and Minority Rights in the US  
Rive, Race, Religion, and Revolt in Colonial Myanmar

# Single Honours Third Year

Special Subject  
(triple weighted)

3 hour seminar  
Every week  
Primary sources

Dissertation  
(double weighted)

Independent study  
Your ideas  
Your questions  
Your research  
Breadth of expertise  
for supervision

Option Module  
(single module)

Significant historical  
questions and  
debates, e.g.:  
'Interpreting Conflict  
in Post-Colonial  
Africa'  
'Revolution and  
History'

# Third Year Special Subjects

The American Civil War and Reconstruction



Developing Africa



Popular Cultures in  
Early Modern  
England

# Module Assessments

## Level 1:

**Making History:** 10% presentation; 15% book review; 15% source analysis; 60% project

**4 Option Modules:** 40% essay; 60% exam

## Level 2:

**Conversations with History:** 10% presentation; 20% essay; 70% project

**2 first-term modules:** 25% first essay; 75% second essay

**2 second-term modules:** 40% essay; 60% exam

## Level 3:

**Special Subject:** 40% exam; 20% first essay; 20% second essay; 20% source analysis

**Single option module:** 40% essay; 60% exam (seen 72hrs before)

**Dissertation:** 100% essay

# The details: Joint Honours

## LEVEL 1

- Three modules in History

## LEVEL 2 & 3 (Ancient, Medieval and Modern)

- Between 5 and 7 modules in History across the 2 years

## LEVEL 2 & 3 (History and English)

- Minimum of 40 credits per year in each department
- Between 100 and 140 credit in each department across the two years
- Usually: Special subject in History OR Dissertation and Single module

For History and Modern Languages, level 3 is spent abroad, so your final year is level 4

<https://www.dur.ac.uk/history/undergraduate/courses/>

# Liberal Arts

## LEVEL 1

- Up to three modules in History

## LEVEL 2

- Up to four modules in History

## LEVEL 3

- Up to 80 credits  
in History

### Subjects you can study in Liberal Arts

Department of Classics  
and Ancient History



Department of English  
Studies



Department  
of History



Department  
of Music



Department of  
Philosophy



Department of  
Theology and Religion



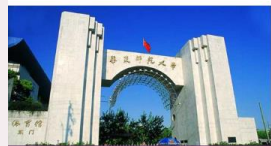
Modern Languages  
and Cultures



History of  
Art







East China Normal University

Shanghai, China



Chinese University of Hong Kong

Shatin, Hong Kong



University of Hong Kong

Pokfulam, Hong Kong



Kumamoto University

Kumamoto, Japan



Kyoto University

Kyoto, Japan



Nagoya University

Nagoya, Japan



National University of Singapore



National Taiwan Normal University



Osaka University



Peking University

Beijing, China



University of Tokyo

Tokyo, Japan



Tsinghua University

Beijing, China



Waseda University



Yonsei University



Zhejiang University

# Placement Year/ Year Abroad

- Students may take a placement year between years 2 and 3
- 40 weeks paid work experience – do not have to be history related
- A wide range of international partners with options to study abroad

# Employability

## Transferable skills:

- Independence
- Identification of sources/information
- Interpretation of sources/divergent opinions:  
critical evaluation of information
- Formation and defence of arguments
- Communication: structuring an argument  
and writing a report; oral presentations

2<sup>nd</sup>

**UK university**

Ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> for Graduate  
Prospects for History in the  
Complete University Guide  
2023

# Student Support

Pastoral care provided by seventeen distinct colleges

- Most colleges have a principal, vice-principal, assistant principal, support officer, student experience officer

Central student support and wellbeing services

- Including student safety, diversity and equality, counselling service, disability support, community engagement

Department support



# History: 'standard' offer

A level offer - A\*AA including History

Cambridge Pre-U - D2D3D3 including History

BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma/OCR Cambridge Technical Extended Diploma – D\*DD and History A level at grade A (or equivalent) is required

IB Diploma score - 38 with 666 at Higher Level including History

<https://www.durham.ac.uk/study/courses/v100/#entry-requirements-927478>

# History: assessment of applications

Applications via UCAS

Our approach to the assessment of applications is 'holistic', considering:

- Evidence of attainment (results and predictions)
- Personal statement
- Reference

We often wait until the UCAS equal consideration deadline to get a sense of the strength of the cohort, meaning large numbers of offers granted in **February and March**. So, don't be discouraged if you don't hear from us immediately!

# History: personal statements

What are we looking for?

It is a *personal* statement. Do not follow templates!

Enthusiasm, commitment, and, above all, potential for:

- **Independence of thought** – we want to know what *you* think about the past, who you agree with, what you think about particular topics, etc.
- **Critical engagement** – and, importantly, why! Why do you disagree with a particular approach? Why do you want to study a specific field more? Etc.

# Get in Touch

- Ask Us:

<https://www.durham.ac.uk/study/ask-us/>

- Unibuddy:

<https://www.durham.ac.uk/study/student-connect/>



**Unibuddy  
UK**

Chat with a UK  
student



**Unibuddy  
International**

Chat with an  
international student

Open Live Chat

Talk with our Admissions  
Enquiries team