UCL  INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY
**MSc Bioarchaeological and Forensic Anthropology**

Degree Coordinator:
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## INTRODUCTION

This is the Handbook for the *MSc* degree programme in *Bioarchaeological and Forensic Anthropology* (we abbreviate it to *BAFA*). It outlines the aims and objectives, structure and content of the degree, and includes outlines of the core course.

This Handbook should be used alongside the MA/MSc Handbook (can be found online at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook ). The MA/MSc Handbook gives essential information on a range of topics, from enrolment to guidance on the dissertation, so students should ensure that they read it carefully. If students have queries about the organisation, objectives, structure, content or assessment of the degree, they should consult the Degree Coordinator.

## AIMS OF THE DEGREE PROGRAMME

"Bioarchaeology" is usually defined as the biological study of human remains in archaeology and "forensic" means relating to courts of law. In our course, we explore particularly the way in which human bones and teeth form part of these studies. Overall, the aims are:
1.  To introduce the main current issues in research on bioarchaeology and forensic anthropology.
2.  To place these issues in a context of evolutionary and developmental biology.
3.  To provide training in the methods used in research.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE DEGREE

On successful completion of the MSc programme, it is intended that students will have:
*   sufficient anatomical knowledge of the teeth and skeleton to allow basic identification of archaeological remains
*   sufficient knowledge of additional methods required for preparation of a basic report on an assemblage of such remains
*   a good working knowledge of the potential for more specialist research
*   a general knowledge of the subject sufficient to allow critical appraisal of published research reports, and planning of research projects.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the MSc programme, students will have developed more general skills, among other things:

*   their powers of observation and of critical reflection
*   their abilities in the organisation, analysis, presentation and interpretation of complex data
*   their abilities to present logical, structured and supported arguments in both written work and spoken presentations
*   their abilities to access and make effective use of information from a diverse range of sources
*   applications of their knowledge of research design, statistical and numerical analytical skills in a range of subject-specific cases, especially in their research project
*   their capacity for working effectively and to deadlines, through independent work and as a member of a team.

## PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The programme of study for this degree is intended to help students meet the objectives outlined above, and also to provide an opportunity for them to achieve any additional personal objectives. It comprises a compulsory 75 credit core course and 15 credits which can be chosen from a range of options, and a dissertation on a research topic related to the field of the degree. Each course addresses a specific subject and has its own Coordinator.

**Core Courses**

### ARCL0114, *Morphology & palaeopathology of the human skeleton*
**Course coordinator: Dr Katie Hemer**
This course is confined almost entirely to the postcranial skeleton (the skull is covered in detail in ARCL0115). It is intended to introduce the anatomy of the bones, the ways in which they vary in size and shape, the diseases that can be diagnosed from bones and the palaeoepidemiological interpretations that can be made.

**ARCL0115,** *Variation and evolution of the human skull*
**Course coordinator:  Dr Rebecca Watts**
This course is intended to give students a detailed introduction to the methodology used in the study of the skull in archaeology and physical anthropology, and the main current issues in research.  It provides an anatomical background to the skull, as well as morphological variation, changes with age and development, and pathology.

**ARCL0116,** *Dental anthropology*
**Course coordinator: Dr Carolyn Rando**
This course is intended to give students a detailed introduction to the methodology used in the study of teeth and jaws in archaeology and physical anthropology, and the main current issues in research.  It provides an anatomical background to the dentition, as well as the histology of dental tissues, morphological variation, changes with age and development, and dental pathology.

**ARCL0117,** *Methodology & issues in bioarchaeology and palaeoepidemiology*
**Course coordinators: Dr Rebecca Watts & Dr Katie Hemer**
This module is intended to give students a detailed introduction to the methodology used in the study of human remains in archaeology, and the issues raised.  It is designed to fit with the other core courses detailed below.  The course introduces standards for the recording of human remains, procedures for excavating them, and provides an opportunity to apply these methods to a small group of previously excavated skeletons.  It also provides an opportunity to discuss the evidence that human remains provide for the circumstances of death and disposal, and also the responsibilities borne by bioarchaeologists studying the remains.

**ARCL0119,** *Forensic Anthropology*
**Course coordinator: Dr Carolyn Rando**
This course in intended to give students an introduction to the techniques needed when dealing with human remains within the legal framework, both within a forensic death investigation and in larger mass fatality scenes. This course provides students with the skills required to create a biological profile for human remains, perform trauma analysis, and understand the role of the forensic anthropologist in a variety of situations.

**Optional Modules**

Students are free to take their final 15 credits from any module offered by the IoA (or outside the department), provided it fits within your timetable. ARCL0181 Advanced Forensic Anthropology is one of these optional modules that you can choose to take – we have scheduled it so it fits ideally with the core modules and complements them. Please see the list of modules for all other options.

**Dissertation**

The dissertation of up to 15,000 words is a research project carried out individually by each student.  It is a very important part of the assessment for the course as it test the student's ability to design and carry out a research project of their own.  The topic is chosen by consultation with tutors, one of whom agrees to act as supervisor for the work.  For this degree, there are six deadlines:
1.  Before Reading Week of Term 1.  Discuss potential dissertation ideas with tutors.  We will keep a dissertation register to show how each student's ideas are developing.
2.  By Reading Week of Term 2.  Arrive at a provisional title and discuss with tutors the availability of study material.  Plan applications for study to museums and collections.
3.  **11th March 2024.**  Due date for the Dissertation Outline.  Tutors will use this as the basis of discussions with each student over the next month.
4.  Week 6 of Term 3.  Viva presentations by each students, to staff and other students, on their dissertation project.
5.  **1st August 2024.**  Deadline for students who wish to have one of their chapters read to send it to their supervisor.
6.  **1st September 2024**.  Dissertation submission deadline.

It is important for the dissertation to define a question or hypothesis that is capable of being investigated.  Under this overall theme, the student needs to define specific research questions which are compact and well-defined enough to address in the time available. They need to plan the resources, research material and methods required to answer these questions and it helps with this planning to develop a good idea what tables and graphs would ideally be presented in the results sections of the dissertation.  One of the degree tutors, Dr Carolyn Rando, Dr Hemer or Dr Watts, will agree to act as the dissertation supervisor, but we work together to give advice.  We will help the student define their dissertation topic and provide guidance through the main stages of the work.  The dissertation provides an opportunity to define and achieve the student's own particular objectives.  It might be used to apply newly learned approaches to an archaeological problem that has long been of interest, or to gain greater experience with particular methods of data analysis. Students can treat the dissertation as a one-off research project, as a pilot study for a Ph.D. project, or use it to showcase their skills to potential employers.

The dissertation must be submitted by **1ˢᵗ SEPTEMBER 2024**. Guidelines for researching, writing and producing the dissertation are included in the MA/MSc Handbook (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook).

Generative Artificial Intelligence is a form of artificial intelligence (AI) that can be used to produce new content including images, audio, video, and text. The use of AI software to generate content for your Dissertation is **not** permitted and its use will be taken very seriously. You can, however, use AI software for 'language and writing review', specifically using software for checking the grammar, spelling, and punctuation of your writing. Should you choose to use AI software in any way, it must be acknowledged in the relevant section of the coursework coversheet, and in your Dissertation following the Library's guidance below (e.g. noting its use in your 'Acknowledgments'):
https://library-guides.ucl.ac.uk/referencing-plagiarism/acknowledging-AI


**TEACHING SCHEDULE**

Taught courses are normally timetabled in the first two terms, though assessed work may be scheduled for submission in the third term, depending on which options have been selected. Full details of the timetable can be found at the end of this document. Modules for this degree are taught using a combination of lectures and practical sessions, meaning that classes for an individual module may be held on different days of the week.
Students are expected to use the remaining months to work on their dissertation, which is due on the 1ˢᵗ of September.


**PRACTICE ESSAY & DISSERTATION OUTLINE**

We set you one Practice Essay early on in the course to give you feedback on your writing style, essay structure, presentation and so on which we hope will be useful for your first essays. There will be a separate sheet describing what is required. The deadline for submission is **13ᵗʰ October 2023**. We will mark it up with detailed feedback and we are deliberately critical in our comments because this is a learning exercise which does not form part of the overall assessment.

You must develop your ideas on dissertation topics (and discuss them with us) through Term 1 and Term 2 and we will expect you to have reasonably firm ideas by the end of Reading Week in Term 2. At that point, you will write a Dissertation Outline, giving your research question and outlining your initial plans on how to address it. The deadline for submission is **11ᵗʰ March 2024.**

**DEGREE STRUCTURE**

| MSc in BIOARCHAEOLOGICAL AND FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY   Coordinator: Dr Carolyn Rando <br> Weighting in Scheme for Award:  Dissertation = 6/12,    30 credit module  =  2/12;  15 credit module = 1/12 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cores: <br> Morphology and Palaeopathology of the Human Skeleton 15 credits <br> Variation and Evolution of the Human Skull 15 credits <br> Dental Anthropology 15 credits <br> Methodology and Issues in Bioarchaeology and Palaeoepidemiology 15 credits <br> Forensic Anthropology 15 credits | 15 credits | 15,000 words | None |

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| **ARCL0114: *Morphology & palaeopathology of the human skeleton*** <br> MODULE COORDINATOR:  Dr Katie Hemer <br> MODULE AIMS:  This course is confined almost entirely to the postcranial skeleton (the skull is covered in detail in ARCL0115).  It is intended to introduce the anatomy of the bones, the ways in which they vary in size and shape, the diseases that can be diagnosed from bones and the palaeoepidemiological interpretations that can be made. <br> TEACHING STRUCTURE:  The course is taught over the first term, through weekly lectures and practicals. <br> ASSESSMENT:  2 Exams at 25% each; one Short Report of 1500 words (50%) <br> BASIC TEXTS: Waldron, T. (2009). *Palaeopathology*. Cambridge University Press. Waldron, T. (2007). *Palaeoepidemiology*. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press. |
| **ARCL0115: *Variation and evolution of the human skull*** <br> MODULE COORDINATOR:  Dr Rebecca Watts <br> MODULE AIMS:  This course is intended to give students a detailed introduction to the methodology used in the study of the skull in archaeology and physical anthropology, and the main current issues in research.  It provides an anatomical background to the skull, as well as morphological variation, changes with age and development, and pathology. <br> TEACHING STRUCTURE:  The course is taught over the first term, through weekly lectures and practicals. <br> ASSESSMENT:  One essay of 2500 words (60%); one Practical Examination (40%) <br> BASIC TEXTS:  Sampson, H.W., Montgomery, J.L. & Henryson, G.L. (1991).  *Atlas of the human skull.*  Texas A & M U. Press.  Scheuer, L. & Black, S. (2004).  *The juvenile skeleton*.  Academic Press. |
| **ARCL0116: *Dental anthropology*** <br> MODULE COORDINATOR:  Dr Carolyn Rando <br> MODULE AIMS:  This course is intended to give students a detailed introduction to the methodology used in the study of teeth and jaws in archaeology and physical anthropology, and the main current issues in research.  It provides an anatomical background to the dentition, as well as the histology of dental tissues, morphological variation, changes with age and development, and dental pathology. <br> TEACHING STRUCTURE:  The course is taught over the second term, through weekly lectures and practicals. <br> ASSESSMENT:  One essay of 2500 words (60%); one Practical Examination (40%) <br> BASIC TEXTS: Hillson, S.W. (2023). *Dental anthropology.* 2/E. Hillson, S.W. (2014).  *Dental development in human evolution and bioarchaeology.*  Cambridge University Press. |
| **ARCL0117: *Methodology and Issues in Bioarchaeology and Palaeoepidemiology*** <br> MODULE COORDINATOR:  Dr Rebecca Watts and Dr Katie Hemer <br> MODULE AIMS:  This module is intended to give students a detailed introduction to the methodology used in the study of human remains in archaeology, and the issues raised.  The course introduces standards for the recording of human remains and provides an opportunity to apply these methods to a small group of previously excavated skeletons. <br> TEACHING STRUCTURE:  The course is taught over the second term, through weekly lectures and practicals. <br> ASSESSMENT:  Osteological Report of 3000 words (100%) |
| **ARCL0119: *Forensic Anthropology*** <br> MODULE COORDINATOR: Dr Carolyn Rando <br> MODULE AIMS:  This course focuses on introducing students to the basic techniques and theory that form the framework of Forensic Anthropology. This will include biological profiling, analysis of trauma, the use of modern records (dental and medical) in identification and understanding the legal framework in which the forensic anthropologist works. Further aims of this course are to provide students with a solid background in the function and role of forensic anthropological skills in both small-scale forensic death inquiries and in larger mass-disaster events. <br> TEACHING STRUCTURE:  The course is taught over the first term, through weekly lectures and practicals. <br> ASSESSMENT:  One essay of 2000 words (50%); one Practical Examination (50%) <br> BASIC TEXTS AND RESOURCES:  Blau, S., and Ubelaker, D. (eds) 2016. *Handbook of Forensic Anthropology and Archaeology 2/E.* New York; London: Routledge. ; Christensen, A., Passalacqua, N & Bartelink, E. (Eds) 2013. *Forensic Anthropology: Current Methods and Practice*. San Diego: Elsevier Science & Technology. |

# Important Dates 2023 - 2024

**Term 1** *(Begins 25th September 2023)*
27th September 2023: First Meeting with Cohort + Practice Essay Set
2nd October 2023: Start of Classes
13th October 2023: Practice Essay DUE
***6th – 10th November 2023: Reading Week***
13th- 17th November 2023: Autumn Student Progress Meetings
15th November 2023: Exam #1 ARCL0114
27th November 2023: Essay Submission ARCL0115
7th December 2023: Skulls Exam ARCL0115
15th December 2023: Forensic Exam ARCL0119
*(Term 1 ends on the 15th December 2023)*

**Term 2** *(Begins 8th January 2024)*
5th January 2024: Essay Submission ARCL0119
10th January 2024: Exam #2 ARCL0114
19th January 2024: Path Report Due ARCL0114
***12th – 16th February 2024: Reading Week***
18th- 23rd February 2024: Winter Student Progress Meetings
*23rd February 2024: Taphonomy Report ARCL0181*
4th March 2024: Essay Submission ARCL0116
11th March 2024: Dissertation Outline Due
19th March 2024: Dental Exam ARCL0116
*(Term 2 ends on the 22th of March)*
*23rd – 25th March: Mock Crime Scene for ARCL0181*

**Spring + Term 3** *(Begins on the 22nd April 2024)*
*19th April 2024: Report submission ARCL0181*
26th April 2024: Osteo Report submission ARCL0117
29th April – 3rd May 2024: Stats Mini Module (days tbc)
15th & 16th May: Vivas (Student presentations; times tbc)
20th – 24th May 2024: Spring Student Progress Meetings
*(Term 3 ends on the 7th June 2024)*

**Summer**
5th July 2024: Suggested completion date for primary data collection (Dissertation)
1st August 2024: Dissertation Chapter Submission Deadline
1st September 2024: Dissertation Submission Deadline

# Module Timetable
# 2023 - 2024

**TERM 1**

| Module | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ARCL0114 | | 12-1pm** | 10-3 (Rm308)* | | |
| ARCL0115 | 12 – 1pm** | | | 10-3 (Rm 308)* | |
| ARCL0119 | 11-12** | | | | 10-3 (Rm308)* |

*Split into groups; assigned during first week of classes

** 433, 16 Taviton St (SSEES)

**TERM 2**

| Module | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ARCL0116 | 1-2pm** | 10-3 (Rm308)* | | | |
| ARCL0117 | | | | 10-5 (Rm308)* | |
| ARCL0181*** | 12-1pm** | | | | 10-3 (Rm 308)* |

*Split into groups; assigned during first week of classes

** 230,14 Taviton St (Anthropology)

*** Optional Module