



MA ARCHAEOLOGY & HERITAGE OF EGYPT & THE MIDDLE EAST



Degree Programme Handbook 2022-23

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INTRODUCTION

This is the Handbook for the MA degree programme in Archaeology & Heritage of Egypt and the Middle East. It outlines the aims and objectives, structure and content of the degree.

This Handbook should be used alongside the [Institute of Archaeology Student Handbook](#), and [IoA Study Skills Guide](#) which contain information about all Postgraduate taught degrees, and further links to information about key dates in the academic year, registration, module selection, methods of assessment, return of coursework, extenuating circumstances, student representation, support and wellbeing, and other important general topics relating to your degree and to your time with us as a member of the Institute of Archaeology, including administrative forms and Turnitin.

All students on the MA Archaeology & Heritage of Egypt and the Middle East as assigned a [Personal Tutor](#), who will be your Degree Coordinator, Prof. David Wengrow, who is also your first point of contact if you have queries about the organisation, objectives, structure, content or assessment of the degree.

Administrative forms relating to coursework submission, extenuating circumstances, extension requests for essay deadlines, progress meetings with your Personal Tutor can all be found in the [Current Students](#) section of the IoA website.

EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

The aims of the programme are to broaden and deepen the student's knowledge of the archaeology of Egypt and the Middle East, and to provide a critical understanding of the cultural heritage of these regions, informed by historical perspectives on the development of archaeology, museums and collections.

To achieve these aims, the programme's objectives are:

1. To provide a wide-ranging and challenging introduction to theoretical issues involved in modern archaeology as a comparative, anthropologically-informed, and socially-situated discipline, with particular reference to the archaeology of Egypt and the Middle East
2. To provide a critical understanding of the cultural heritage of Egypt and the Middle East, including the history of archaeological investigation in its colonial and post-colonial contexts, and the evolving role of museums and collections, as well as the contemporary challenges of archaeology and heritage work in conflict and post-conflict regions, and in their wider political contexts
3. To encourage a critically aware perspective on archaeological and heritage practice and research processes in Egyptian and the Middle Eastern archaeology
4. To provide an in-depth understanding of the approaches to the collection, analysis and interpretation of archaeological data, with particular reference to data from or relevant to Egypt and the Middle East
5. To provide detailed study at the forefront of knowledge in the material culture and cultural dynamics of Egypt and the Middle East, and critical debates in the archaeology of these regions, and in the wider comparative frameworks of archaeology, art historical, and anthropological analysis
6. To provide a sufficiently detailed understanding of archaeological data from Egypt and the Middle East to serve as a basis for independent research
7. To foster the ability to develop original research questions, appropriate to Egypt and the Middle East, and to explore them effectively through research
8. To provide training relevant to a professional career in the archaeology and heritage of Egypt and the Middle East
9. To provide a strong background for continuing on to a research degree in the archaeology and/or heritage of Egypt and the Middle East

These aims are pursued through core courses designed to provide a solid understanding of the history, theories and methods of archaeology and heritage studies, both globally and with special regard to the study region. In addition, a range of options is provided from which students can define an individual pathway through the programme, tailored to their specific interests and personal educational objectives. All students undertake a supervised research project leading to a 15,000 word dissertation, which enables them to develop specific practical analytical and interpretive skills as well as broader research skills.

On successful completion of this course a student should:

- have familiarised themselves with major, current issues of interpretation in the archaeology and cultural heritage of the study region, and their historical and intellectual background
- be able to apply comparative and anthropological perspectives to the study of these issues
- have a sense of the long-term history of the study region, including changing patterns of interaction from prehistory to the present
- developed their critical faculties in discussion, debate, and evaluation of alternative interpretations and perspectives on archaeological data
- acquired a range of subject-specific skills relevant to their further development
- developed a range of research-oriented skills appropriate to the archaeology and cultural heritage of Egypt and the Middle East
- carried through a substantial programme of independent research embodied in a dissertation on some aspect of the archaeology of the study region, demonstrating both theoretical understanding and practical competence in archaeological analysis and interpretation

Learning outcomes

By the end of the course students should be able to demonstrate:

- advanced critical analysis of field studies and archaeological interpretations
- ability to compare and analyse data across traditional regional and disciplinary boundaries
- deployment of archaeological data to answer questions of wider anthropological and historical significance
- critical approaches to the cultural heritage of the main study regions, with attention to the modern political contexts of archaeology and museums
- written, oral and visual skills in analysis and presentation

It is fully appreciated that no student will have a detailed command of the archaeology of the entire study region, and this is not an aim of the degree programme. The emphasis throughout is on a) developing issues which are more productively addressed in a comparative framework than through regionally isolated studies; b) exploring the potential of interdisciplinary and cross-cultural perspectives for future, innovative work within the archaeology of the regions concerned, including doctoral research.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The degree is available either full-time over one academic year or part-time over two academic years (commencing September). It comprises three core courses (15 credits each), three further option courses (totalling 45 credits) chosen by the student in consultation with the degree coordinator, plus a dissertation of 15,000 words prepared on a germane topic, with guidance from an assigned supervisor. Each 15-credit module is weighted 1/12; 30 credit modules are 2/12; and the Dissertation 6/12 in the Scheme of Award for the overall degree.

Core Courses:

All students must take the following:

- Archaeology of Egypt and the Near East: a Comparative Approach (ARCL0157; 15 credits; 11 weeks)
- Heritage Ethics and Archaeological Practice in the Middle East and Mediterranean (ARCL0199; 15 credits; 11 weeks)
- Themes, Thought and Theory in World Archaeology: Foundations (ARCL0133; 15 credits; 11 weeks)

Option Courses:

Students choose options worth 45 units of credit (usually three 15- credit courses) from a wide range [Masters student options](#). At least 30 credits should normally derive from optional courses closely related to the core study region (e.g. 'Themes and debates in Egyptian archaeology,' 'Middle Bronze Age to the Iron Age in the Near East: City-states and Empires' - the precise choices will vary, based on availability, from year to year). The remaining 15 credits may be made up from amongst an outstanding range of other Masters courses offered at the UCL Institute of Archaeology. Subject to approval by the degree coordinator, courses may also be taken at other UCL departments, the School of Oriental and African Studies, and King's College London. All options are subject to availability and resources (please note not all courses are available every year). Subject to availability, students on this course may also take options in ancient Near Eastern topics in UCL's History Department.

Dissertation:

(90 credits) A dissertation of 15,000 words (90 credits) will be prepared by the student on a suitable topic, resulting from individual research in depth with guidance from an assigned supervisor. Dissertations will vary considerably but typically develop the intellectual, methodological and comparative aspects of a question and combine this with an in-depth analysis of the rich data furnished by the main study region. Approaches that break new ground or explore new connections or comparisons are strongly encouraged. Guidelines for researching, writing and producing the dissertation - including appointment of supervisors, submission deadlines, and a schedule of review sessions - are found in the MA/MSc Dissertation Handbook, which you will receive in Induction Week from the Masters Tutor, Prof. Kevin MacDonald.

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 for each course are included in the course handout. Students are expected to use the remaining months to work on their dissertation.

Students pursuing the degree on a part-time basis must agree their choice of courses with the Degree Co-ordinator, and will normally take the at least two core courses within their first year. They may start work on the dissertation at the same time as full-time students, or they may wish to start later; either way they should consult the Degree Co-ordinator, and their Dissertation Supervisor, once the latter has been appointed.

TEACHING METHODS

Please refer to individual course handbooks.

PREREQUISITES

Courses for Masters programmes do not have prerequisites; students will have been accepted to the programme on the understanding that they already have sufficient background in archaeology or a relevant field, either through their previous degree, or through relevant experience, to be able to follow the programme and courses for which they have been accepted. If, however, students wish to change their programme, or the courses in which they indicated an interest in enrolling in, in their application, they should discuss this with the relevant Degree and Course Co-ordinators.

For some courses, depending on the student's previous background, it may be recommended that they also attend (but will not be assessed for) a parallel undergraduate lecture course, to ensure that they have the background to get the most out of the Masters level seminars.

ORAL EXAMINATION

All Master's students are required to attend an oral examination, normally as part of their Dissertation assessment. This will usually be held in late May or early June, by which time students will have submitted to their Dissertation Supervisor and Degree Programme Co-ordinator a single sheet of A4 summarising the proposed research design of their dissertation to which they will speak. The oral examination will take place as a group session in which each student gives a c.10 minute presentation in front of their peers, the Degree Co-ordinator and their Dissertation Supervisor. The floor will then be opened to questions from both students and staff for a further 10 minutes. Following the presentation each student will have a meeting with their Dissertation Supervisor to discuss further their Dissertation programme. No marks are awarded for the oral examination; the assessment is satisfactory or unsatisfactory. In the event of a problem being identified by the examiners of the Dissertation, students may be invited to attend a formal viva voce examination with the External Examiner for the degree also in attendance. Part-time students and students on two-year MA programmes will normally be required to give a Dissertation presentation (viva) in the year in which they are examined in the Dissertation.

COMMUNICATION AND MOODLE

The primary channel of communication within the Institute of Archaeology is e-mail. Please ensure that you check your UCL email account regularly for updates. Please also ensure that you keep your contact details (especially your telephone number) up to date on Portico, in case you need to be contacted.

The MA Archaeology & Heritage of Egypt and the Middle East degree also makes use of UCL's online teaching resource: 'Moodle'. At the start of the course please log on at: <http://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/>, and register for the course: **ARCL0157: Archaeology of Egypt and the Near East – A Comparative Approach**. Once registered you will find online materials such as reading lists that are available to you throughout this core course, as well as links to important forms and documents. Moodle may also be used as a channel of communication between you and the Programme Coordinator, so it is important that all students register and make use of the service. The Moodle page for ARCL0157 may also be used to communicate general messages to students enrolled on this degree.

LIBRARIES AND OTHER RESOURCES

In addition to the Library of the Institute of Archaeology, other libraries in UCL with holdings of particular relevance to this degree are:

Main Library (especially Ancient History section)
Science Library (especially Anthropology section)
SOAS Library

Libraries outside of UCL which have holdings which may also be relevant to this degree are:

British Library
British Museum Library
Egypt Exploration Society
Palestine Exploration Fund

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Institute has a Health and Safety policy and code of practice which provides guidance on laboratory work, etc. This is revised annually and the new edition will be issued in due course. All work undertaken in the Institute is governed by these guidelines and students have a duty to be aware of them and to adhere to them at all times.

FEEDBACK

In trying to make this degree as effective as possible, we welcome feedback during the course of the year. Students will be asked to fill-in Progress Forms at the end of each term, which the Degree Co-ordinator will discuss with them, which include space for comment on each of their courses.

At the end of each course all students are asked to give their views on the course in an anonymous questionnaire, which will be circulated at one of the last sessions of the course. These questionnaires are taken seriously and help the Course Co-ordinator to develop the course. The summarised responses are considered by the Degree Co-ordinator, the Institute's Staff-Student Consultative Committee, Teaching Committee, and by the Faculty Teaching Committee.

If students are concerned about any aspect of a specific course, we hope they will feel able to talk to the relevant Course Co-ordinator, but if they feel this is not appropriate or have more general concerns, they should consult their Degree Co-ordinator, Personal Tutor, or the Graduate Tutor (Dr. Mark Altaweel). They may also consult the Academic Administrator (Judy Medrington), the Chair of Teaching Committee (Dr. Louise Martin), or the Director (Prof. Kevin MacDonald).
