

I'm writing to you about your application to study BA Classical and Historical Archaeology in the Department of Archaeology at the University of Sheffield. As you know, the University will be adjusting how it delivers its courses in the autumn to accommodate the social distancing measures required to combat the coronavirus pandemic. The current plans involve a blend of face-to-face teaching in small groups in Sheffield, where social distancing can be maintained, supported by digital delivery. In this email, I'll explain what this will mean for your studies on the BA Classical and Historical Archaeology degree.

Course content

There's no change to the overall learning outcomes of the course. You'll still obtain an advanced understanding of how we study the human past through archaeology and a proficiency in archaeological techniques, as well as a wide range of transferable skills. However, to accommodate the new protocols for the 2020-21 academic year, we have made some adjustments to the content and structure of Level 1.

The core and optional Archaeology modules are all the same, but we've moved the modules with lab or field components from Semester 1 to Semester 2, when we hope social distancing restrictions will have been relaxed. We also hope to be able to run our field training programme in a similar way to previous years next summer. In their place, we're moving two lecture-based modules from Semester 2 to Semester 1.

Finally, we've removed the 40 'unrestricted' credits available at Level 1, where students could study any Level 1 modules, not just the options listed in your programme regulations. Because of the challenges of managing module selection during the pandemic, the University has suspended unrestricted credits for 2020-21. In their place, we've added to our list of options the following 20-credit modules drawn from other Archaeology courses, and from courses offered by our colleagues in the other departments in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and one Department in the Faculty of Social Sciences:

AAP108	World Civilisations
AAP110	Classical World and its Legacy
EAS1021	Understanding China 1
EAS1022	Understanding China 2
EAS1031	Understanding Japan 1
EAS1032	Understanding Japan 2
EAS1041	Understanding Korea 1
EAS1042	Understanding Korea 2
MDL106	Understanding Spanish & Latin American Culture
MDL107	Understanding Modern France
MDL108	Understanding German History and Culture
MDL112	An Introduction to Russian Culture
MDL1012	Russian Language (Post A Level)
MDL1013	Spanish Language (Post A Level)
MUS117	Popular Music Studies
MUS125	Music of the World
MUS126	History of Western Music
MUS129	Music Psychology

MUS133	The Materials of Music
MUS134	Harmony and Counterpoint
MUS140	Folk Music Participation
REL1001	LGBT Studies
REL1013	Religion in Britain
RUS117	The Soviet Union: 1971 - 1991
SCS1001	The Sociology of Everyday Life
SCS1003	Understanding Inequality
SCS1005	Gender, Sexuality and Society
SCS1007	Understanding Crime
SCS1011	Classical Sociological Theory
SCS1029	Welfare, Politics and the State
SCS11001	Introduction to Media and Communication in Society
HST117	The Making of the 20th Century
HST122	Land of Liberty? Rights in the USA, 1776-2016

You'll also be able to choose a foreign language module which you can study for credit through the [University's Languages for All scheme](#).

Please be assured that there will still be a wide selection of modules for you to choose from, you'll still get to learn all about Archaeology, and you'll still acquire the knowledge, understanding and academic skills you'll need for Levels 2 and 3.

Teaching

As you know, the majority of our teaching comprises lectures, seminars, lab practicals and field trips and we'll still be using these formats in 2020-21. Teaching will be spread across the usual two semesters and will start the week commencing Monday 28 September.

It's not possible to social distance in a crowded lecture theatre, so we'll be delivering all our lectures online. Lectures are primarily presentations by one of our subject experts, and online delivery suits the format well. We'll be providing you with lectures in our online learning environment, along with a full complement of learning resources and clear communication with the teaching staff.

You will also be having small group classes in Semester 1, to accompany the lectures. For these interactive classes, we'll be using a combination of face-to-face and digital teaching, and you'll have regular, timetabled sessions of each form. The face-to-face sessions will take place in small groups, so that we can use our larger teaching rooms and still maintain social distancing. Our face-to-face teaching has always taken place across the University's campus, and this won't change in 2020-21. The digital sessions will be live and fully interactive, for example group video calls.

Our academic staff will be available as usual for tutorials and other one-to-one meetings, and will still hold their regular office hours. It may not be possible for these sessions to take place in person, but if not you'll be able to make an audio or video call.

Learning resources

Most of our learning resources are already available online, and this includes all the core reading for our Level 1 modules. Our physical libraries will be open as soon as it's safe to do so, and our librarians are committed to providing as full a service as possible, taking into account social distancing requirements and all the latest government advice.

Assessment

Coursework assignments are already completed electronically, and submitted and marked online.

We're still finalising our plans for exams, but we won't be holding formal, invigilated exams in the Semester 1 exam period in January/February. It's likely we'll use an 'open book' format instead, where exam questions are made available online and you have a certain amount of time, for example two days, to answer them. You'd complete your answers electronically at home, and you'd be able to consult your books and notes. Some other universities use open book exams as a matter of course. We'll confirm the arrangements for Semester 1 exams in the individual module handbooks you'll receive when you join us.

Costs

The tuition fee for the course will stay the same, and we don't expect students will incur additional costs as a result of the changes we're making. You'll be able to participate in all the online activities using a regular laptop or tablet connected to the internet, although you will need a microphone and camera to contribute fully in virtual discussions.

I hope this email has given you an idea of what to expect when you join us in the autumn. As you'll be aware, this pandemic is a fast-moving and unpredictable phenomenon, and we might need to make further changes as the situation develops and the University responds to updates in public health guidance. Please be assured that we'll be approaching the next year as a single departmental family of staff and students together, and we're committed to ensuring that you're supported, and that you still receive a world-class university education here at Sheffield.

If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch with our Level 1 Student Support Officer Paul Dennington at p.j.dennington@sheffield.ac.uk.

Further information

Please keep looking out for emails from the University and checking our [frequently asked questions](#), which are updated regularly with all the latest developments. We also have some on demand content from our online [applicant open days](#) which you might find useful.

I hope you enjoy what's left of the summer and stay safe,

Best wishes

Caroline Jackson
Head of Department
Archaeology