
Programme section

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Welcome to your 2011–2012 study year as an International Programmes student

This **Programme section** provides academic guidance along with practical information and advice that is specific to your studies as a Classical Studies student. We hope that we have covered everything that you need to know during your studies, but if you require any additional information or support, please do not hesitate to contact a member of our staff. If you would like to suggest any additional information which you think should be included, please complete and return the Comment form at the end of this *handbook*.

For practical information that applies to all of the programmes offered through the International Programmes, such as how to pay your fees, please refer to the **General section** in the second half of this *handbook*.

Please note, final examinations for the programme are taking place in 2015.

Therefore, you should bear this in mind when deciding your study choices and the number of courses you wish to be examined in each year.

You will be notified directly of any changes likely to affect your study programme but you may also find it helpful to check our website:

www.londoninternational.ac.uk

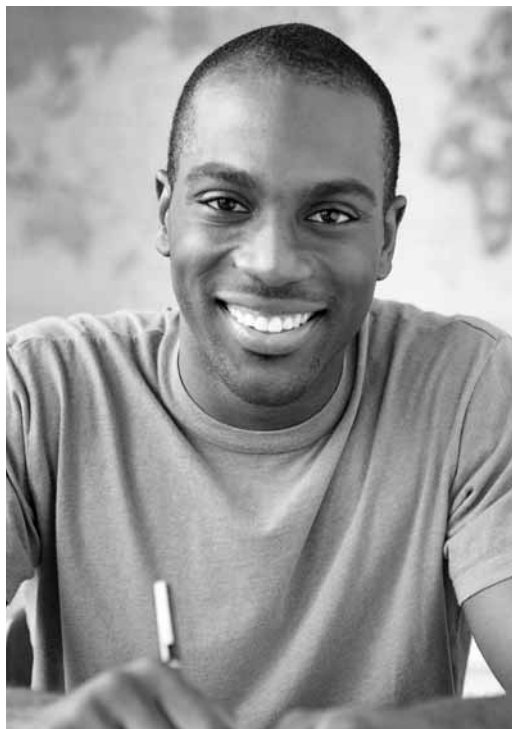
and the Student Portal:

<http://my.londoninternational.ac.uk>

which are regularly updated with the latest news.



Introduction



Why study Classics at university?

Classics is the study of the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome. These cultures underpin much of the cultural development of modern Europe and enter into dialogue with many other cultures, past and present. The Classical world gave us great works of literature, the Western philosophical tradition, a powerful artistic and architectural vocabulary, and cultural and political institutions and concepts which are of major importance to the present day, such as democracy and Christianity; drama, epic poetry; the idea of the Good; the idea of legal codes, administrative and military organisation, and so on. The contemporary world and its many diverse cultures are, of course, often very different from the worlds of Greece and Rome. But, whether in agreement, or with noted difference, many aspects of our lives relate meaningfully to classical antiquity. By studying Classics we can understand many crucial aspects of our pasts, and in doing so will also be better equipped to understand ourselves in the present.

The study of Classics at Royal Holloway offers an education in a comprehensive range of disciplines. Through studying Classics, one can be a philosopher and a literary critic, an archaeologist and a historian. On this programme you will learn how to analyse texts and artefacts closely, to critically explore new ideas and to think in different ways. This course also aims to:

- broaden your perspective on the world
- enrich your experience
- satisfy your curiosity

- introduce you to new questions
- teach you how to ask your own questions.

You will also learn how to form persuasive, structured arguments, to form an opinion and to bring your critical facilities to bear on a whole range of issues. And indeed, should you be heading on to another career at the end of your course, the basic skills you will acquire here – framing the question, background research, argument, criticism, summary, presentation and so on – will stand you in good stead outside of the academy, in the world of the present, in what we call the ‘real world’.

Why study Classical Studies with Royal Holloway?

The Department of Classics at Royal Holloway maintains a dynamic international reputation for teaching and research.

The department is active in the study of a wide range of aspects of the thought and practice, writing and material culture of antiquity, as well as in the study of reception (via its Centre for the Reception of Greece and Rome). We are a key contributor to the teaching of philosophy at Royal Holloway, and support many interdisciplinary initiatives.

In the 2008 UK Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), 80 per cent of our submission was recognised internationally for its originality, significance and rigour, while a significant proportion of this was considered world-leading or internationally excellent. It is this quality of research that informs our teaching.

Who is the programme aimed at?

The programme is aimed at anyone who wants to learn about the Classical world and who wants a BA Classical Studies degree from a prestigious university, but with specific benefits for any student with a busy lifestyle.

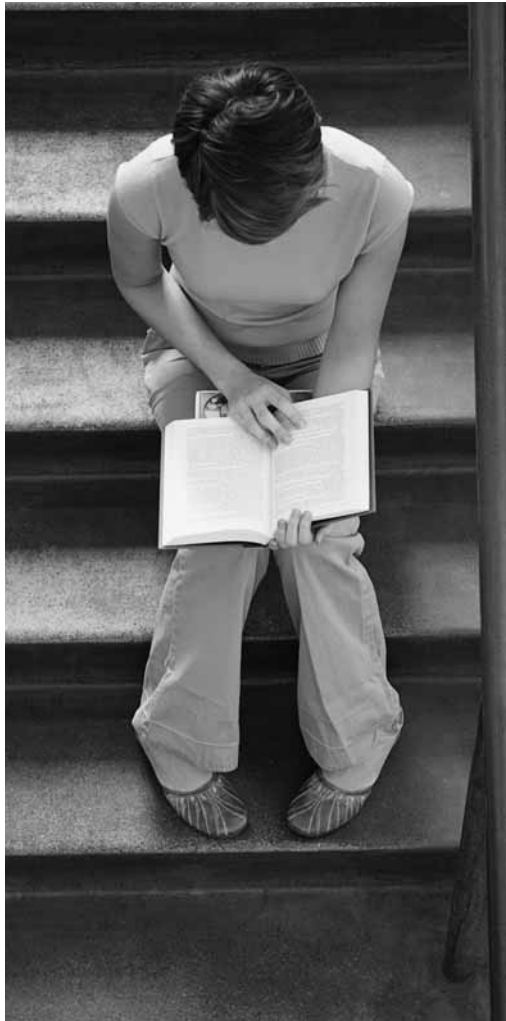
Study at your own pace, anytime, anywhere

No prior knowledge of classics or classical languages is required. Instead, our Level 1 Foundation courses will provide you with the background and fundamental skills and knowledge that you will need to progress to honours level in subsequent years.

Who has written the courses?

All e-degree courses available on this programme conform to the same high standards which are taught on-campus to BA Classics/Classical Studies/Ancient History undergraduate students at Royal Holloway as part of their degree programmes. Many e-degree courses are, in fact, identical to on-campus courses, except for the necessary adjustments for online distribution. The course authors are mostly members of the staff of the Department of Classics who are actively involved in on-campus teaching and research. Some courses have been prepared by other academics in liaison with, and under the supervision of, members of the Department of Classics at Royal Holloway. See the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) for details.

The University, University of London International Programmes and Royal Holloway



This chapter provides some background information about the University of London and the relationship between the University of London International Programmes and Royal Holloway.

The University of London: a centre of excellence

The University of London, which was established in 1836, is one of the oldest and largest universities in the United Kingdom. It is a federation of 19 colleges and 12 institutes. Some colleges are specialised (such as the School of Oriental and African Studies and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine), while others are multi-faculty (such as University College London and Queen Mary, University of London). Specialist institutes include the Institute of Commonwealth Studies.

The University of London International Programmes

In 1858, Queen Victoria signed the University's fourth charter which permitted the University's degrees to be accessible to students who did not want or could not come to London to study. This groundbreaking initiative is one of the earliest examples of a university making its degrees accessible to students and established what has now become known as the University of London International Programmes.

International Programmes students register for a range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and our students, who come from over 190 different countries, have an age range of between 18 years old to over 70 years old.

Some join the International Programmes immediately after leaving school, while others may have been working for a number of years and need a qualification in order to improve their prospects. Others purely seek the challenge of studying a new subject at degree level. In many countries graduates of the International Programmes occupy senior positions in government, commerce and industry. The value of a University of London degree is well recognised throughout the world.

Our new name

In August 2010, we changed our name from the External System to the University of London International Programmes to better describe ourselves in the twenty-first century. This change allows greater clarity and inclusiveness and we believe it will help us to reach many more students like you in the future.

One critical thing has not changed – we continue to offer worldwide access to a university education of consistently high standard. We're very proud of our (and your) reputation and will continue to build on everything the External System stood for and achieved.

Our name may have changed, but the people, values, reputation and history remain exactly the same.

Lead College – Royal Holloway, University of London

Royal Holloway, University of London, stands as a monument to two Victorian visionaries, Elizabeth Jesser Reid and Thomas Holloway. Both played a crucial

role in the development of equality in education through the creation of two colleges for women, Bedford College in London and the Royal Holloway College in Surrey, 19 miles to the west of central London. Their foresight and philanthropy have ensured opportunities for many generations of students.

Elizabeth Jesser Reid, a pioneering social reformer, founded Bedford College in 1849 as a women's college. Bedford College was the very first institution to play a leading role not only in the advancement of women in higher education, but also in public life in general.

Thomas Holloway was a self-made multi-millionaire who made his fortune in patent medicines. He founded Royal Holloway College in 1879 after initiating a public debate inviting suggestions as to 'How best to spend a quarter of a million or more'. It was his wife Jane who suggested a college for women as the means by which Holloway's money might effect 'the greatest public good'.

In 1900, both Bedford and Royal Holloway were admitted as Schools of the University of London and in 1965 they both admitted male undergraduates for the first time, while retaining their commitment to women's education. The colleges merged in 1986 and have since adopted the name Royal Holloway, University of London.

Administrative and technical support

In this chapter we clarify how to obtain assistance with any matters relating to administrative or technical issues. We include under these broad headings any matters that do not directly concern Classics or related content, as well as assisting with any personal problems that may affect your progress through the programme.

There will be times when you have a question or a problem which needs attention from the University. General issues relating to your studies should be addressed to Royal Holloway. Queries of an **administrative nature** (e.g. examination entry, registration) or a **financial nature** should be addressed to the University of London International Programmes.

Administrative support

There will be times when you have a question or a problem relating to administrative matters. Please note that some administrative queries are dealt with by Royal Holloway and others are dealt with by the International Programmes. The separation is as follows:

- Programme-specific administrative queries relating to your studies on the BA Classical Studies programme, such as the selection of courses, allocation of tutors, problems with study materials, scheduling of online seminars, and so forth, should be addressed to Royal Holloway.
- General administrative queries concerning issues such as examination entry, module registration, or fees should be addressed to the International Programmes.

These are each now explained further.

Support at Royal Holloway

The VLE has a message facility by which you can submit general administrative queries relating to your studies on the BA Classical Studies programme. Your messages will be confidential, meaning that other students will not be able to see what you have written. Such queries might concern dates for online seminars or examinations, personal problems affecting your studies (such as language difficulties), financial or social problems, advice on further courses of study, and so forth.

Don't forget to mention the programme that you are studying and your contact details when posting a query in the VLE. We will aim to answer your query within ten working days.

If you are having trouble logging in or accessing the VLE then you can contact the Support Office at the address shown in the Contacts pages. The office is open during term-time, Monday–Friday 0900–1700 (GMT) except during UK holidays.

Support at the International Programmes

The staff at the International Programmes will answer any questions you have about fees, examination entry, registration, changes of address, despatch of materials and other administrative procedures. A full list of contact names and addresses can be found in the 'Contacts' section of this *handbook*.

Again, don't forget to mention the programme that you are studying and give your contact details when contacting the International Programmes.

Technical user support

If you are having trouble with technical issues, such as accessing any of the study materials or discussion areas, then you can use the message facility in the VLE to get user support. Please check first to see if other students have had the same problem.

Please note that the user support service is not there to teach you how to use and set up your computer, how to use any necessary software, or to troubleshoot any faults with your computer or Internet Service Provider.

Before you contact the user support service, please make sure that you have met the recommended PC hardware and software requirements (see page 46).

If you are having trouble logging in or accessing the VLE then you can contact the Support Office at the address shown in the Contacts section. The office is open during term-time, Monday–Friday 0900–1700 (GMT) except during UK holidays.

Do not forget to mention the programme that you are studying and give your contact details when posting a technical query in the VLE or contacting user support directly.

We will aim to answer your query in two working days.

New developments in 2011

Online services

As part of our drive to enhance the services we provide to students, we will be offering you more facilities online over the coming years as part of our Business Transformation Programme.

In addition to being able to contact us via the details listed on the following pages, you will soon be able to do the following activities online:

- register
- select study courses
- pay fees
- inform us of a change of address
- apply for special examination arrangements
- view your personal records
- enter for examinations.

In future, we will also be aiming to offer additional services online and will publicise these to students as they become available.

We will be contacting you about these services as they are rolled out, so look out for email alerts from us which will tell you how to access these new facilities.

New codes

Note that course/module codes are new from the 2011–2012 academic year and replace any previous year's examination numbers. This change does not affect the syllabus or content of the course/module. The new code for each course/module is shown next to the course title in Annex A and Annex B of the Programme Specification and Regulations. For a table showing how old examination numbers are replaced by new course/module codes, see the University of London International Programmes website:

www.londoninternational.ac.uk/new_codes

Contacts

If you have a query, the following list provides contact details for the members of staff in the International Programmes who will be able to help. Whenever you contact a member of staff it is important that you remember to give your full name, student number and the programme you are studying. This will help the member of staff locate your student record and deal with your query as quickly as possible.

Emails

Hundreds of emails reach us every day from students all over the world. This huge (and growing) volume of email has a considerable impact on our work. Because of this, you will find that some staff and offices are using an 'automated response' message, particularly at busy times.

To help us deal with email enquiries efficiently and without undue delay, please observe the following etiquette when sending your message:

- Be organised – please ensure you send the message to the correct person or office (see Contacts pages).
- Be considerate – please do not copy the message to other people or other offices.
- Have patience – allow seven days for a personal response to be made to your message **before** making a further enquiry.
- Be responsible – if re-sending a message or enquiring about an earlier message, always say that this is a repeat enquiry and give the date when your original message was sent.

When sending an email, please make sure that you include your student record number and a brief description of your query in the email subject. For example: 'SRN 012345678 – Change of address'.

Main address

The postal address for all staff is (unless otherwise given):

University of London
International Programmes
Stewart House
32 Russell Square
London WC1B 5DN
United Kingdom

Support Office, Royal Holloway

Moore Building
Royal Holloway
Egham, Surrey
TW20 0EX
Tel: +44 (0)1784 443392
Fax: +44 (0)1784 471517
Email: DLHistory-Admin@rhul.ac.uk

Staff at the International Programmes

Queries about despatch of materials:	Registration and Learning Resources Office Tel: +44 (0)20 7862 8322 Fax: +44 (0)20 7862 8329 Email: enrolments@london.ac.uk
Queries about, or requests for, transcripts:	Transcripts Office Tel: +44 (0)20 7862 8549 Fax: +44 (0)20 7862 8300 Email: transcripts@london.ac.uk Website: www.londoninternational.ac.uk/transcripts
Queries about degree and diploma certificates:	Diploma Production Office Tel: +44 (0)20 7862 8301 Fax: +44 (0)20 7862 8287 Email: diploma.enquiries@london.ac.uk
Applications for special examination arrangements, or if you need your study materials to be provided in a particular format:	Special Needs Coordinator Corporate Performance and Quality Tel: +44 (0)20 7664 4824 Email: specialneeds@london.ac.uk
Should you be concerned that an administrative error may have been made in the calculation of your examination results:	Administrative recheck of results Corporate Performance and Quality Email: uolia.recheck@london.ac.uk Website: www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams/admin_recheck
To notify us that you have changed your name or address, or to request a certificate of registration:	Registration and Learning Resources Office Tel: +44 (0)20 7862 8322 Fax: +44 (0)20 7862 8329 Email: enrolments@london.ac.uk
Queries about transfer of registration to another degree or diploma in the International Programmes:	Registration and Learning Resources Office Tel: +44 (0)20 7862 8322 Fax: +44 (0)20 7862 8329 Email: enrolments@london.ac.uk

Queries arising from your studies that are not directly academic or concerned with admissions, accreditation of prior learning or examinations:	Programme Enquiries The Information Centre Tel: +44 (0)20 7862 8361/8397 Fax: +44 (0)20 7862 8358 Email: programme.enquiries@london.ac.uk
Queries about accreditation of prior learning:	Student Admissions Tel: +44 (0)20 7862 8045 Fax: +44 (0)20 7862 8363 Email: admissions@london.ac.uk
Queries about examinations:	Student Assessment Office (Classics) Tel: +44 (0) 20 7862 8353 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7862 8349 Email: external.exams@london.ac.uk
Examination entry forms are available from:	www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams/register
Queries about fees:	Fees Office Fax: +44 (0)20 7862 8559 Email: ipstudents.fees@london.ac.uk
To join the University of London Union (ULU):	Membership Applications University of London Union Malet Street London WC1E 7HY Website: www.ulucol.ac.uk
Queries about the presentation ceremony:	Corporate Affairs, Executive Office Tel: +44 (0)20 7862 8543 Email: uolia.corporateaffairs@london.ac.uk
Queries about the Alumni Association:	Alumni Relations Tel: +44 (0)20 7664 4826 Fax: +44 (0)20 7862 8349 Email: uolia.alumni@london.ac.uk
Technical support for the Student Portal and/or VLE	Email: uolia.support@london.ac.uk

The BA degree in Classical Studies

This chapter considers in more detail your chosen programme of study.

- **Familiarity with the foundations of Western culture**

Classics helps us to know where we come from, culturally speaking. This should lead to a broad-minded evaluation of our own culture, and to the building of bridges with other cultures both within and outside the European tradition.

- **Thinking about first principles**

The ancient Greeks and Romans asked, and provided some possible answers to, many basic questions of life which have been in the past, and still are, of fundamental interest to us today. What accounts for the present state of the world? What are we here for? What does it mean to be a successful human being? How should we run our communities? How should we behave towards other people? What attitudes should we take to politics, money, law, work, religion, love or war?

- **Understanding and evaluation of other points of view**

The ancient Greeks and Romans thought differently from us about many things. Studying their way of thinking encourages open-mindedness and critical judgement. You can begin to look at life from a new and different perspective.

Educational aims of the programme

The aims and learning outcomes of the department's undergraduate degree programmes are related to the Classics and Ancient History Benchmarking Statements

issued by the relevant Benchmarking Groups of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education. The department's undergraduate degree programmes aim:

1. To provide opportunities for students to explore the diverse range of ancient world studies and to specialise in relevant disciplinary areas.
2. To deliver programmes which are informed by the research expertise of staff, which are suited to the needs of students, which provide opportunities for students to develop academically, and which, where appropriate, prepare students for postgraduate study.
3. To develop knowledge and understanding of the Classical world and of the research associated with it.
4. To support the development of a range of transferable skills suitable both for further academic study and for a range of future careers.

Learning outcomes of the programme

Teaching and learning in the programmes are closely informed by the active research of staff, particularly in the general areas of: literature, history, philosophy, archaeology and art history of Greece and Rome. In general terms, the programmes provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

A. Subject Specific Skills

The programme is designed to allow students to develop and demonstrate the following:

- a knowledge base and grasp of appropriate methodologies
- interpretative and analytical skills in dealing with a variety of primary and secondary source material, including some of literary and/or philosophical, archaeological, documentary, and legal material
- skills necessary for the written presentation of arguments and debate
- the capacity for independent thought and study.

In addition students will be expected to acquire competence in the following:

- skills necessary to study institutions and societies over the *longue durée*
- a critical awareness of the multiplicity of material available and the strengths and weaknesses of the various forms of historical information
- a range of skills and knowledge of methodologies deployed in the study of ancient literature
- an ability to compare ancient institutions and societies
- an ability to attain an understanding of ancient cultural and social forms from a range of different source materials.

B. Intellectual Skills

The programme is designed to allow students to acquire competence in the following intellectual and cognitive skills:

- critical reflection on the extent and limitations of how and what one has learned, discovered and understood
- critical judgement in the light of evidence and argument
- extraction of key elements from complex data and identify and solve associated problems
- marshalling argument lucidly, coherently and concisely, in writing
- autonomy in the direction of study, research and intellectual initiative, and the management of time.

C. Key Skills

The programme is designed to allow students to develop the following key skills:

- the ability to gather, handle and retrieve information from a wide range of sources
- the ability to present material in written form
- the ability to deploy a range of IT resources effectively, including some or all of word-processing, finding and exploiting websites, spreadsheets and databases.

How is the programme taught?

The study materials are predominantly computer-based and are supplied either over the internet or in a series of CD-ROMs. These materials use interactive methods to present information and are primarily intended to be viewed on screen. Some courses also have accompanying textbooks, and all have suggested links to Further reading and internet resources.

Each course is also supported by a series of online seminars, designed to further enhance your appreciation of study materials.

For each course there will be a range of assignments which you will be asked to complete. None of these assignments are compulsory, but they are your opportunity to receive private feedback from a tutor, an assessment of the quality of your work and to practise the tasks that you will be asked to perform for your final assessment. Additionally, there will be support from tutors, especially for seminars, and discussions which are not moderated by tutors in which you can learn in co-operation with your peers.

How is the programme assessed?

Each course is assessed by examination, normally in May. The examinations will take different forms depending on the nature of the courses and will parallel the assessments completed by our on-campus students. Some examinations will be by 'open-paper', meaning that you will have advance knowledge of the questions, but

will complete the paper under examination conditions. These 'open papers' will be published after the examination scrutiny board has met, normally by the end of February and will be made available online through the VLE. Other courses will be assessed by an unseen paper. Some courses will require you to complete essays; others will require a mix of commentaries on passages provided and essays. Level 1 courses will have two-hour papers. All other courses have three-hour papers. Level 1 courses will be marked by an Examiner and moderated by another Examiner before being passed for external scrutiny. Second and third level papers will be examined by two internal Examiners before being subject to external scrutiny.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment (i.e. assessment which does not count towards your final mark) will be provided on all Classical Studies courses. This is your opportunity to see how you are doing, and to receive personal advice on how to improve your skills. You will receive both comments and an indicative mark, which will allow you to assess yourself.

The courses will operate with their own deadlines which will be set by the course tutors. Work submitted after those deadlines will not be marked, though the tutor and course director are allowed some discretion in exceptional circumstances. Coursework should be submitted electronically, written in English, using 12-point font, and annotated to an acceptable standard. Particular courses will have assessments which vary according to

the learning outcomes of the courses, but the departmental norm is for coursework essays at Level 1 to be between 1,500–2,000 words and at later levels to be between 2,000–2,500 words.

How do you know our assessment of your work has been fair?

To ensure that our assessment of your work is fair, we use various techniques:

- All your assessed work is graded by an internal marker. For Foundation level courses, the marks are then ‘moderated’ (checked) by a second internal marker. They are then sent to an Examiner external to the University who will again check a selection of scripts and essays. For Intermediate and Advanced levels, all work is ‘double-marked’ by two internal Examiners who work without seeing the other’s marks. The work is then sent to the external Examiner for moderation.
- All examinations are identified by a number only. Markers do not have information on your personal details. If, due to special circumstances or other unusual events, it becomes necessary to reveal the identity of an examinee, this will only be done in a closed meeting attended by senior staff and external Examiners.
- External Examiners are academics in other universities whose job it is to check on standards. The Examiners are independent and report to the University of London.

Assessment criteria

All coursework and examination scripts will be marked using the numerical scheme set out below:

First	70% or above
Upper Second	60–69%
Lower Second	50–59%
Third	40–49%
Fail	0–34% and 35–39%

For assessments based primarily on essay-type work, marks will be awarded broadly according to the following criteria:

70%+	The student satisfies the marker with reference to the majority of the following: independence of thought, confident command of relevant material, ability to sustain a relevant and focused argument, clarity of presentation, understanding of issues, skills of analysis and synthesis. In order that first class marks may make their proper contribution to the final average, it is important that they should not be limited to the 70–73 range. Marks of 75+ may be given to students who impress the marker with reference to one or more of the preceding criteria in addition to satisfying the marker with reference to the majority of the criteria. Markers should therefore use the full 70–80 band analogously to others, and give 80 or above for outstanding work.
60–69%	The student writes and argues clearly, shows good broad factual knowledge, is aware of issues, and addresses the question.
50–59%	The student shows fair overall knowledge, displays an awareness of issues and attempts to address them.
40–49%	The student shows some broad or some specific knowledge but a weak grasp of the issues, and/or poor presentation.
35–39%	The student has enough knowledge to attempt to answer questions (i.e. evidence of some effort made).
0–34%	The student is unable to attempt adequate answers. Marks of 5 or below should be reserved for almost blank questions.

More detailed assessment criteria may be provided for individual courses, but they will be in line with the criteria laid down here.

For the award of the degree, please see the information provided within the Programme Specification and Regulations.

Examinations

Assessment of this programme is by examination, and so it is extremely important that you understand what you need to do and how best to study for an examination. Some of you will be fresh from studying and examinations, while some of you may worry that you have forgotten how to pass examinations.

These brief notes are here to remind you. As you will see, it pays to:

- know the Programme Specification and Regulations
- plan for examinations
- study regularly
- read the essential study materials and external resources
- revise effectively.

For further advice on preparing for examinations see page 32.

Plagiarism and annotation

The International Programmes employs the use of online plagiarism software and your work may be submitted to this online service. The plagiarism detection software will help Examiners identify poor academic practice or potential plagiarism in students' work.

All work submitted by students for assessment must be expressed in their own words and incorporate their own ideas and judgements. Plagiarism means presenting as your own someone else's words or thoughts without acknowledgement. Deliberate plagiarism is regarded as cheating, and will result in disciplinary action. All cases of plagiarism will be referred to the Head of Department for formal disciplinary action, which could result in expulsion from the programme.

When you quote the words of a modern author, you should use quotation marks and indicate your source clearly (at each point in the text where you draw on a secondary source). Likewise, when you are paraphrasing modern authors, the source should be indicated clearly.

Material available from websites, as well as material available in more traditional published forms, must be acknowledged when used.

You must annotate your work properly. When you have borrowed an idea from a scholar or have quoted from a written source, you must provide enough information for that source to be checked. There are various systems for annotation. We recommend that in the text you include:

- the author's name (date of publication): page numbers if a book, e.g.:
Alston (2002): 199–201.
- If quoting an article, do not use page numbers, e.g.:
Alston (2003).

You must then provide a full reference in your bibliography. e.g.:

Alston, R. (2002) *The City in Roman and Byzantine Egypt*, London, New York.

Or:

Alston, R. (2003) 'Reading Augustan Alexandria', *Ancient West and East* 1: 141–61.

Italics or underlining should be used for the title of the volume as it would appear on the shelf.

Websites should be given in full: thus, for the *Temple of Dendur* at the New York Metropolitan Museum, you would have:

www.metmuseum.org/collections/view1.asp?dep=10&full=0&item=68%2E154

For ancient sources, you should use the conventions as used in the secondary literature you have been using, but if in doubt give titles and references without abbreviations.

If you are in doubt, contact the tutor.

Your feedback

As we assess you, so we need you to assess us – to tell us what we get right and to help us improve. We have many years' experience delivering these courses but every year we learn something new from our students which will help us to improve. We will evaluate your performance in examinations and in the course, and we will also take seriously your comments which will be sought by the Distance Learning Programme team and passed on to the course team. We will continually review our provision in the light of experience and of your comments.

Scope and structure of the programme

The programme aims to provide you with a good grounding in Classics subjects. You should consult the Programme Specification and Regulations document for the weighting of the three levels, requirements for progression between levels, and for the way your degree class is arrived at. At each stage, you must complete the equivalent of four courses.

The first level is a foundation stage. We offer eight courses each valued at one half course:

Course title	Description	Assessment
Introduction to Greek Literature	An introductory, historical and critical survey of classical Greek literature from Homer to the end of paganism, with texts studied in translation.	2-hour unseen examination
Introduction to Roman Literature	An introductory course studying, with reference to select works in translation, the chronology and development of the main literary genres from the beginnings of Latin literature to mid-second century AD.	2-hour unseen examination
Introduction to Ancient Philosophy	The course aims both to inform students about ancient philosophical ideas and to introduce them to philosophical argument. It combines a brief survey of the principal ancient philosophers, from the Presocratics to Aristotle, with study of selected texts on the topic of courage, including Plato's <i>Laches</i> .	2-hour seen examination
Greek History and the City State	An introductory course examining Greek history, society, and institutions from the beginning to the late fourth century BC, with particular attention to the problems and methods of reconstructing the past from the ancient sources, the historical context of Greek literature, and the development of the City State.	2-hour unseen examination
Roman History and Society: the Julio-Claudians	An introductory course dealing with the history and the political, social and economic institutions of the Roman Empire to AD 68. The course aims to provide an introduction both to the period being studied, through excerpts from the ancient sources in translation, and to the methods and approaches available to the ancient historian.	2-hour unseen examination
The Birth of Christian Europe	This is an introductory course dealing with the transformation of the ancient world in the period from the end of the fourth century to the seventh century AD, and the transition to medieval Europe. The course focuses on Gaul and Italy in the period from the rise of the Christian Church and the formal division of the Roman Empire into East and West to the effective end of Roman power in the West with the Byzantine conquest of Italy and subsequent political turmoil.	2-hour seen examination
Introduction to Greek Archaeology	The main aim of the course is to familiarise students with the material culture of Greek civilisation from the Late Bronze Age to the Hellenistic period. Also the principal forms of Greek art and architecture, with their stylistic development and social context, will be covered. The latter part of the course will introduce the student to questions of production and trade, and to different archaeological theories and interpretations and their relationship with Greek archaeology.	2-hour unseen examination
Introduction to Roman Art	The course aims to familiarise students with the principal forms of Roman artistic culture (architecture, painting and mosaics, statuary, sarcophagi, coins, metal-ware, glass and pottery) from the second century BC to the early fourth century AD, and with past and current theories regarding their use as evidence of political, intellectual, social and economic life in the Roman Empire.	2-hour unseen examination

You may substitute Classical Studies with History courses from 'Gateway' or 'Foundation' subjects to the value of one course.

The second level is the intermediate stage. We offer six courses, all of full course value, of which you must complete four.

Course title	Description	Assessment
Homer	A study of the <i>Iliad</i> and the <i>Odyssey</i> , consisting of close study of the text and of broad themes, and of the historical and artistic background.	3-hour unseen examination
Virgil	A literary study of the Virgilian corpus in translation, in its artistic and political context.	3-hour unseen examination
Roman Britain	This course is a case-study in Roman imperialism and an introduction to the material culture of the Roman Empire. It covers the conquest of Britain, its transformation into a Roman province, later changes in its administration and defence, and the impact of incorporation into the Roman Empire on the physical environment, religion, economy and society of the island. Particular emphasis is placed on the rich archaeological evidence, some of which can be seen in and around London.	3-hour unseen examination
Greek History to 322 BC	The course covers Greek political and social history from Homer to Alexander, from the emergence of classical Greek civilisation and institutions in the ninth century BC, to the break-up of the classical Greek world at the hands of Macedon.	3-hour unseen examination
Greek and Roman architecture	The course studies the practice of architecture and building in the Greek and Roman world, investigating such themes as the development of architectural orders, the role of architects, the design process, the sources and supply of building materials and techniques, planning of cities and other forms of settlement, and civic, religious, funerary and domestic building types.	3-hour unseen examination
Augustus: Propaganda and Power	In 28 BC Octavian returned to Rome having defeated Antony and having captured Egypt. His first act was to restore the Roman Republic. In so doing, he inaugurated the period we know as the Empire, a period of monarchy. This course centres on understanding that transformation.	3-hour unseen examination

You may substitute Classical Studies courses with History courses from 'Group A' or 'Group B' subjects to the value of one course.

The third level is the advanced level. We offer six courses, all of full course value, of which you must complete four.

Course title	Description	Assessment
Greek Drama	Selected plays by the five major dramatists are studied to illustrate aspects of Greek theatre, including: drama as performance; the treatment of myth, politics and religion; characterisation; language; structure. Aristotle's <i>Poetics</i> is also examined.	3-hour unseen examination
From Nero to Hadrian: Literature and society	This course attempts to understand the changes in mentality and culture in the early Roman Empire through a combined study of literary culture and social history, focusing on issues of identity.	3-hour unseen examination
The dialogues of Plato	A study of the philosophical and literary aspects of dialogues from all periods of Plato's activity. Approximately equal lengths of time will be devoted to: (i) Platonic dialogues earlier than the <i>Republic</i> ; (ii) the <i>Republic</i> ; (iii) the (much shorter) <i>Philebus</i> or <i>Theaetetus</i> (alternating each for two years at a time), studied in detail and with compulsory examination questions; (iv) other post- <i>Republic</i> dialogues.	3-hour unseen examination
Women in Classical Antiquity	The course examines the treatment of women in classical literature, history, philosophy and art with emphasis on Greece, Hellenistic Egypt, and Rome. Topics include: women in myth, epic, law, satire, drama, historiography, religion, and Roman elegy; women's writing; modern interpretations of women in antiquity; ancient medical theory.	3-hour unseen examination
The Roman Army	This course looks at the Roman Army as an institution by close study of the primary sources – literary, papyrological and epigraphic – in translation, together with the archaeological evidence. It surveys the army's origins and development under the Republic, but focuses mainly on the Principate, covering its personnel, organisation and operation in war and peace, but also its central role in the administration and policing of the empire and impact on provincial populations.	3-hour unseen examination
Pompeii	The course studies the physical remains of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and the villas at Stabiae, Oplontis and Boscoreale, on their own exceptional terms and within the wider context of Roman Italy c. 200 BC to AD 100. Topics include the analysis of the population, environment, urban planning, and infrastructure, housing (design, construction, decoration, and room function), suburbs, port, cemeteries, farming, industry, trade, commerce, religion, bathing, sport, the theatre and the amphitheatre.	3-hour unseen examination

You may substitute Classical Studies with History courses from 'Group B' to the value of one course.

The following History 'Group B' courses are available:

- The Crusades and the eastern Mediterranean 1095–1291
- Experience, culture and identity: women's lives in England 1688–c.1850
- Ethnicity, identity and citizenship in modern British life
- Modern political ideas.

This list of History courses is also available on the International Programmes website:

www.londoninternational.ac.uk/prospective_students/undergraduate/holloway/history/structure/shtml

Resources

The best resources you have for a course are the learning materials we provide online. Additionally, for certain courses, we will send out to you a small number of books. We may recommend that you purchase certain books, but they will be cheaply and easily available and either not an absolute requirement for the completion of your course, or available through other sources. Many of the reading resources have been digitised and integrated into the course materials. Other resources are provided through links to websites or online databases of journals.

How much time should you allow for study?

Individuals differ in how many hours per week they devote to study. It is therefore difficult to be precise, or to make suggestions. It is important that the hours devoted to study (however many they may be) follow a consistent pattern, in order to maintain continuity and prevent you from having to 'restart' each time you try to work.

About online distance learning

There are many ways in which online distance learning is different from traditional classroom-based teaching and it is important that you understand how it works.

Presumably you have already anticipated some of the advantages of distance learning, otherwise you would not have joined this programme! However, we will identify a number of the more commonly mentioned ones, just to make sure that you are aware of them.

There are also some disadvantages to distance learning in comparison to attending a taught programme, and we will also identify some of these. Having an awareness of these will help you to study more effectively. Most importantly, we will indicate where in this *handbook* you can get more information about how this programme has been designed to help you overcome these potential difficulties.

The advantages of an online distance learning programme

Whatever your reasons are for choosing distance learning, the following advantages of participating in an online distance learning programme will apply.

Cost – high value on your investment

When the total cost of fees, transportation, living expenses and release from employment are taken into account, the cost of completing the BA Classical Studies degree by distance learning is, for most people, significantly lower than the cost of an on-campus degree. It is usually possible for students on distance

learning programmes to remain in active employment during the course of their studies, which makes financing their study much easier.

Convenience – study anywhere, anytime

Distance learning allows you to study from the location of your choice. You do not need to leave your home, your family, or possibly your country in order to complete the programme. Distance learning allows you to plan your studies around your other life commitments.

Pace – schedules to fit your lifestyle

You can study in your own time at your own pace. Although there will be some timetables and deadlines in place (for example, for online seminars and examinations), in general you can plan exactly when you want to read the study materials and conduct the necessary Further reading.

On-demand access to materials

Study materials are always available. If you attend a programme at Royal Holloway and you miss a lecture, you may struggle to catch up or obtain a copy of the lecture notes. With an online programme you can access the materials over and over again.

Confidence

For many students, the process of online distance learning helps to develop confidence. Studies have also shown that students who may be shy about offering opinions in a traditional classroom environment often feel less reticent about expressing themselves in an online discussion.

Monitor your progress easily

The study materials have been designed in order to provide you with frequent opportunities to gauge what you have learned and what you haven't. Many courses include elements of self-assessment that help you to monitor your understanding of the issues under discussion.

Tailor the programme to your study style

The programme has been designed to give you the opportunity to learn about the Classical world in a variety of different ways. Study materials use a combination of text, audio and interactive exercises. Online seminars and discussions provide you with the chance to discuss the content of the programme with fellow students and tutors. We hope that the use of different techniques means that people with different learning styles can all learn about Classics in a way that most suits them.

Learning from your peers

One particular advantage of online learning is that it encourages you to take the opportunity to learn from your fellow students all around the world. These discussions can take place in open environments where they can remain for the duration of each programme so that you can always refer back to them for ideas and inspiration.

The disadvantages of an online distance learning programme

There are also some difficulties associated with distance learning and it would be unwise to underestimate their potential impact. By making them clear to you now, we hope that you will be able to recognise them and consider those ones which may affect you. One of the purposes of this *handbook* is to provide you with advice on how to overcome some of these potential difficulties.

Technology

One of the most obvious challenges for online learners is technology. You may encounter difficulties for one of the following reasons:

- lack of experience or confidence in using a computer
- technology doesn't work properly (you encounter computer or network difficulties)
- slow or expensive internet connection limits your access to materials.

We have implemented various strategies in order to avoid or overcome these challenges:

- We strongly advise you to take the European Computer Driver License (ECDL) (or equivalent) before embarking on one of our programmes. This will help ensure that you are a confident PC user. You can find out more about the ECDL at:

www.ecdl.org/publisher/index.jsp

- We have provided a VLE user guide so that you can familiarise yourself with the Virtual Learning Environment before you start studying.
- We have specified a minimum set of computer, application and internet connection specifications that you should have accepted before enrolment on the programme.
- We will provide the bulk of study materials on CD-ROM so that you do not have to download large files over your internet connection.
- We provide technical support so that you can get help if you experience technical problems when accessing our website.

Isolation

The greatest challenge with distance learning is probably the potential for isolation and the lack of face-to-face interaction with staff and other students. We have thus designed the BA degree to offer plenty of potential for interaction with other people involved with the programme. It is your responsibility to use the tools and activities provided to reduce any sense of isolation you might begin to feel. We encourage you to take advantage of all the opportunities to meet and work with both the tutors and your peers online.

Keeping motivated

Any type of distance learning requires a high degree of self-motivation. It takes a lot of effort to study on your own and keeping your motivation high may be difficult over such a long period of time. It may help you if you identify some short- and long-term goals to aim for during your study. The next chapter includes some suggestions on how to stay motivated.

Organising your study

Online distance learning is probably different from any other learning experience you have had before. Unlike traditionally taught programmes, which provide a rigid structure of lectures and seminars, the distance learning BA degree only gives you fixed dates for online seminars and examinations. Although the study materials are structured carefully to give you an indication of how much time you should spend on them, you will need to plan your own study timetable and to decide how much study you will do each week. It is best if you develop a steady commitment and apply self-discipline to create a habit of regular study. See the next chapter for some suggestions on how to manage your time effectively.

Differences between the campus and distance learning programme

We are continuing to offer the BA Classical Studies degree as a taught programme on campus at Royal Holloway. We regard the distance learning BA degree programme which you have enrolled for simply as a different way of teaching the same degree.

Is the quality of teaching the same?

Some of you may also be concerned about whether you will receive the same quality of teaching as students studying at the Royal Holloway campus. We believe very strongly that you do, and in fact that in some respects you gain significant advantages by studying in this format (see 'Advantages of an online distance learning programme' earlier in this chapter).

We develop the campus and distance learning BA degree programmes together, and keep their syllabuses as closely matched as possible. Royal Holloway and the University of London subject all programmes to rigorous quality assessment to ensure that the same academic and teaching standards are met for both students studying at Royal Holloway and those studying at a distance.

Is the BA degree qualification the same?

Upon successful completion, you are awarded a University of London degree. There is only one University of London degree and it is awarded both to students attending Royal Holloway and to International Programmes students.

It is the same standard of courses, teaching, and evaluation and the same material, taught by the Department of Classics at Royal Holloway.

Planning your studies



This chapter provides some useful advice about how to study this online programme effectively. A number of studies on distance learning have shown that students who are well-motivated and organised are normally the most successful. If you follow the advice below, you should be able to organise your time and stay motivated.

Study guidance

During your earlier phases of education and in your working life you will have acquired your own specific styles and methods of studying. The distance learning format provides a high degree of flexibility as to how you organise your study, and it is up to you to decide how to progress through the programme most effectively.

You should be able to fit your studies around work and family commitments, but you must also make sure that you organise

your studies within the constraints of the overall schedule of online seminars and examinations. **Information about seminars will be publicised on the Programme notice board in the VLE. Look out for announcements concerning dates, topics and requirements for online seminars after registration for a particular course.**

Reporting breaks of study

If you are going to discontinue studying for a time, you should inform the college Student Support Office of the intended period of discontinuation and of any particular problems (e.g. concerning health). Make sure to stick to the deadlines for handing in reports or coursework. Permission to submit work late will be given only under exceptional circumstances, e.g. in cases of illness, for which you need to produce a doctor's

certificate. Do not wait until the deadline to let us know if there has been a problem. Note that with any longer discontinuation, you run the risk of losing a total year of study as you may fail to be admitted to the examinations.

How to study the programme

In this section you will find some useful advice about how to study effectively on this online distance learning BA degree programme. You can find more comprehensive advice in *The Arts Good Study Guide*, included as part of your study pack.

Make sure you know the requirements

Please take great care to make sure that you are aware of what is expected of you throughout your studies. As a distance learning student, you need to be particularly responsible for taking this initiative – nobody is going to stand up in front of the class and remind you of an important regulation or announcement. You should:

- Make sure that you have read and understood this *handbook* from cover to cover before you start your studies.
- Make sure that you have read and understood the Programme Specification and Regulations. By doing so you will hopefully avoid a number of unnecessary administrative or technical problems, which can take time and effort to resolve and may distract you from your study.
- Make sure that you read the instructions for each course very

carefully. Pay close attention to the learning objectives of each topic and try to complete as many of the exercises and tasks as you can.

- Pay close attention to announcements. Make sure that you regularly check any notices where information relating to courses that you are studying, or the programme in general, are posted.

Set study targets

Staying motivated is one of the challenges of distance learning. Some of you may have no problems doing so, but for others it might be a good idea to set yourself study targets. You must set your study targets carefully or they may have quite the opposite effect than you were intending. You will need to work out what works best for you.

Some people find that the following acronym helps them to set appropriate goals:

SMART

SMART goals are ones that are:

- **S**pecific – for example, I will study from 6pm to 8pm every day (rather than I will study 14 hours a week)
- **M**easurable – for example, I will read five chapters or write 500 words
- **A**chievable – for example, I will check the discussion board three times a week not five times a day
- **R**ealistic – it is better to set small targets that you know you can meet, rather than big ones that you know you will not
- **T**ime-bound – for example, I will finish this essay by Saturday.

It is best for you to set personal goals that you are comfortable and happy with. You should aim to challenge yourself by making your goals difficult to achieve but not so difficult that you disappoint yourself.

In order to set effective goals, it is important that you develop a clear understanding of what you should be achieving. You will find specific learning objectives at the beginning of each topic and course. You should make yourself familiar with these objectives and, at the end of each topic and course, you should check whether you have accomplished what was expected.

Find a suitable place to study

Everybody is different when it comes to studying. For example, some people can study with background music on while other people prefer silence; some people can read on a train while others need to be in a library. The important thing is that you find a place where **you** can study without being distracted.

Once you have decided where you are going to study, make sure that other people (such as your friends, colleagues or family) know that you will be studying there and that you prefer not to be disturbed for a specified time. It can be a good idea to discuss this practical aspect of studying with the people around you (at work or at home) before your needs are perceived by them as a problem.

You should also think about the different activities that are involved in studying an online course and whether different activities may be suited to different places. For example, you will obviously have to

use a computer to access lecture notes, download some materials and participate in discussions and seminars. However, at other times, you will need to read or take notes and you may not want to do this in front of a computer. If you are not studying at home you may find it helpful to find out what materials (e.g. textbooks, journals, calculator) you will need to take with you to study effectively.

Find a time to study

The flexible structure of the course lets you study at your own pace and rhythm. However, this doesn't mean that you don't need a schedule. You should choose a schedule which suits you best and which is in line with the overall goals you want to achieve and which also fits in with your other commitments.

Though it may seem rigid, you should create your own weekly calendar to guide you through the course and help you use your time efficiently. This will provide you with an idea of what you want to cover in a given period of time.

It will take between an hour and a half and three hours to work through a topic, and you may want to split very long topics into two parts. You should find out when seminars will take place and when assignments are due in and add these to your calendar. You can then plan your time and your studies around these key events.

Allow for plenty of slack in your schedule. There will be days when you don't feel like working, or when unexpected work or family pressures impose on your time. There may also be occasions when you experience computing or network

problems. By avoiding 'last minute' scheduling you should be able to cope with such eventualities.

Be sure to allocate enough time for study and let your friends and family know that you need a regular period of concentrated work. However, do make sure that you still have time for family, friends and recreation.

Develop a flexible study strategy

In particular, at the beginning of the course it will take longer to tackle areas that are unfamiliar to you. Once you have developed an understanding of the basic concepts you will find the material easier to follow and you will soon become familiar with the terminology and the language specific to the subject you are studying.

An advantage of any distance learning programme is that it allows you to adopt a range of different study strategies. When starting a course it is a useful practice to skim through the online material, to get a sense of what is familiar to you and what each topic is about. You may then return to the beginning and work through the topics in the suggested order. But you may also spend less time on subjects you know about and take longer to work through what is new and challenging.

Studying is an iterative process: you will find that the material contains plenty of cross-references between different topics. You can go back to something you studied earlier and get a different view of the topic or look up a concept that you are not familiar with.

With most courses it is a good idea to start with the first topic and then work through all the topics in numerical order. Most of the courses have been written so that each topic builds on the knowledge and skills taught in the previous ones. However, you may find that with some courses you can dip in and out, depending on your own preferences and existing knowledge.

Another good strategy while studying is to take written notes and to summarise your reading. This will help you to quickly recall the main points of material that you have already processed and will prove useful for revision. Organise your work and notes (written or electronic) into files so that you can easily find them and use them whenever necessary. **If you are primarily working electronically, make sure that you make a backup of all the important information!**

Getting involved

Another extremely important way of staying motivated is to get involved with other people. While some people are happy studying on their own, most people thrive on social contact and there is no doubt that the quality of your learning on this programme will be greatly enhanced by your engagement with the other students and tutors.

The most important way in which you can communicate with other people is to get involved in the online activities on the programme. Make sure that you participate in online seminars, follow the discussion areas, make contact with other students and share your experiences.

Adapt to different teaching styles

You may notice that different tutors present their materials in different ways. Many academic writers have contributed to this programme and they all have specific views of their subject and how it should be taught. We have tried to give the study materials a consistent look and feel, but we have deliberately allowed some of the personal style of the academics to remain. As in face-to-face teaching, you will need to allow yourself some time to adapt to these variations in style and to the techniques used by different tutors to guide you through the materials. For example, in some courses you will find that you are asked to do a lot of task-based learning, whereas in others you may be doing more reading and note-taking. The tutors will also have different methods of running their online seminars – in some cases you will do a straightforward discussion of themes from your readings; in others you may be asked to present a particular argument or a piece of writing that you have done.

You will also find that the content of topics appears to overlap in some areas. This is because we wish to provide you with an opportunity to re-establish and deepen your understanding of key themes in each course and programme. Again, this is similar to the experience you will have in the seminars and lectures of a course that is taught face-to-face.

As with any academic course, you may sometimes detect errors and conflicting views, though we have tried to eliminate these in the editing process. In many situations there is no single correct approach, and it is a learning objective of

this programme that you recognise those situations where different opinions can arise, and also that you develop the skills to make your own informed opinion about the issues concerned. However, if a point of confusion arises, then we would like to hear from you so that we can address it. Your view on improving the materials is highly appreciated. Don't hesitate to let us know if you think something should be changed in the next update of the course.

Further reading

The required readings have been carefully chosen to cover all the programme requirements. In some topics you may also find references to extra readings. Reading these may deepen your understanding and broaden your perspectives of the issues arising from the study material.

Extra reading can be helpful, but it may be difficult to read extensively within a tight timetable and some students may not have access to a library. The best advice on how to proceed is to apply common sense.

Extra reading will be stimulating, but do not lose sight of what is expected. Be selective in your choice of reading. Remember that it may not be necessary to read a textbook from cover to cover – it may be sufficient to read chapters dealing with those topics that you particularly wish to learn more about.

Accessing Further reading texts may also be difficult. Some of you may have access to a library, although it may not contain all the books on the booklists. In this case your only option may be to purchase some of the texts in question. If you are on a tight budget then you may want to be selective about which books to buy. Here are some suggestions on book purchasing:

- Pay close attention to the advice given on particular courses regarding the appropriateness of a text.
- Consider your own personal interests when you decide to purchase a text.
- Particularly consider purchasing a text that is likely to be useful on more than one of your programme courses.
- Read book reviews and consult with other students and tutors on the programme regarding particular books.
- Consider sharing books with other students who live geographically close to you.
- Internet sites recommended in course resource sites or by course tutors are more likely to have been checked for quality of content. The same will apply to sites recommended by reliable web portals or resource sites of respectable organisations.
- Internet sites recommended by fellow students will be as reliable as the student who has recommended them. You may quickly discover on the programme which students you trust for such information and which you do not.
- Never rely on just one internet site for information. Read as much as you can about a subject and base your confidence in information on the amount of consensus that you find from different sources within different sectors. Note that a fact expressed repeatedly on different sites does not make it true – misinformation spreads very quickly on the internet.
- Where possible, always try to corroborate information obtained from the internet by also obtaining it from a more traditional source, such as books or published journals or articles. While these are not necessarily flawless themselves, in most cases they will have been reviewed more carefully than an internet site.

Internet resources

As well as providing you with access to course materials and discussion areas, the internet is a valuable source of information. Tutors often provide details of websites that you should visit to see images, maps or to read further information.

It cannot be stressed enough that you must take care to evaluate any information that you obtain over the internet, as the very nature of the internet lends itself to a huge amount of unreliable and erroneous information. You must learn to be selective and judgemental in your processing of information obtained in this way. Much of this is common sense, but here are a number of tips on how to use internet resources wisely:

- Trust the information you obtain as much as you trust the source writer or organisation. If you have no other knowledge about the source then you simply must treat the quality of the information with caution.

If you need further advice on how to search the internet intelligently and how to decide what to trust, there are guides available, for example at:

www.vts.rdn

These guides tell you about key internet sites for your subject, how to search the internet and how to decide what to trust on the internet.

If you feel that you need to build up your confidence and familiarity with the internet, try the BBC's free 'Webwise' course:

www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/course/

Preparing for examinations

In this section we provide some advice on how to prepare yourself for examinations by revisiting and pulling together the information you have learned on the programme. You will also find useful hints on revising for examinations in *The Arts Good Study Guide*.

How should you revise for examinations?

Set aside the time

After working through the study topics of a course, you should block out enough time for revision. Try to make very few appointments and postpone any big parties in the weeks before the examination period! Concentrate first and foremost on revision. Make yourself a revision timetable. Set yourself time to do the same amount of revision for each of the main subjects on which you will be examined. Try to stick to this schedule. Do not spend lots more time revising the subjects you like best or find easiest. Likewise, do not spend all your time on the subjects you find most difficult. Finally, do make sure that you don't spend every minute on revision – that way you'll not go mad. Short breaks will refresh you and prevent you from becoming completely obsessed.

Be aware of the styles of examination questions

You should prepare yourself for the styles of question that are likely to be asked in the examinations. This can be done by looking at previous examination papers and reading carefully any advice provided by course tutors (especially in cases where there may be a change in the style of questions asked compared to previous years). Note that question style is likely to vary from course to course. Where possible, examples of examination questions and past papers are provided with the study materials.

You should not rely on trying to guess exactly which questions are likely to be asked in a future examination. Although some of the questions in previous examination papers appear to cover similar topics, future questions may vary in the way that they are phrased and this variation can change an easy question into a very difficult one.

Practise writing examination answers

If you are not familiar with the British system of taking written examinations, it is particularly important that you practise writing examination answers under time constraints. Where possible we have provided examples of previous examination papers for this purpose.

Preparing for the examination itself

Finally, it may seem obvious but make sure that you know in advance exactly where the examination is being held! Most students will have some distance to travel to the examination centre and

many of you will have to plan for the necessary overnight accommodation. Take enough time to find out exactly where the examination takes place and how you get there. Make yourself familiar with the building. Students have been known to go to the wrong place and try to take the wrong examination! Get a good night's sleep beforehand. Make sure that you arrive in plenty of time for the examination, so that you are relaxed. Take a watch with you. If you have some distance to travel, catch an earlier train or bus, so that you can be certain you will be there on time. Make sure you have suitable pens and pencils and that your pen/ biro has sufficient ink for the duration of the examination.

How to do well in examinations

Doing well in examinations is mostly a matter of how much you have learned and understood – but it is also a matter of examination technique. In this section we provide some advice on good examination technique. Examinations are quite a good test of your ability both to organise yourself and to think carefully under pressure.

You will also find useful hints on doing well in examinations in *The Arts Good Study Guide*.

Read the instructions carefully

Make sure that you read the examination instructions carefully and that you know exactly what you are being asked to do. Pay particular attention to the number of questions that you are expected to answer, and which parts of the examination are compulsory or optional. **The easiest way**

to fail an examination is not to answer enough questions. It is not uncommon for a student to answer too few questions, and each question not answered will automatically be awarded zero marks. If you have to answer three questions, and you answer two, you will have to produce very good answers in those two just to pass. So, the first priority is to check the number of questions you have to answer and to allocate time for each of them.

Think first – and make a plan

In any examination, you should spend perhaps a sixth of your time just thinking and planning and not writing answers at all. In a three-hour examination, for example, you should spend the first ten minutes studying the whole examination paper carefully, reading the instructions and selecting the questions that you are going to answer. Similarly, before you answer each of the questions that you have chosen, spend at least five minutes developing a plan. Once you start writing, you can change your plan if necessary. The time to read the questions and develop your plan is built into the examination.

You should make your overall choice of questions, before you start answering any of them, part of this plan. This way you avoid panicking when you have answered one or two questions and don't know what to do next. Similarly, take care over the order in which you answer the questions. Starting off with the easiest can seem the best solution. However, it does have one big disadvantage – the examination gets worse and worse as you go on. In an examination where you have to answer three questions, some people prefer to

answer the second-best question first. Then tackle the easiest question. This way you should be feeling good when you come to the most difficult question. It is up to you.

Read each question carefully

Surprisingly few students do this well. Most marks in examinations are lost through a failure to answer the question properly. First, read each question carefully, then go back and read the instructions again. Remember that when you see a question in an examination paper that you seem to recognise, check first whether it is exactly the same, or slightly, though significantly, different. Many students get caught out and just write answers to the questions they have revised, failing to check whether these questions were actually asked in the examination. Check and double-check.

Pay attention to the marking scheme

Every examination paper will ask you to answer a certain number of questions, and marks will be allocated to each question.

It is very important to note how many marks are available for each part of each question and to devote time to answering these parts in proportion to the marks involved. Spending time perfecting one part of a three-mark question at the expense of beginning a ten-mark question is a bad mistake! Similarly, don't try to read too much into the meaning of marks for parts of questions unless you have been specifically advised to do so. Three marks do not always mean that exactly three issues have to be identified. Pay attention to any advice issued by course tutors on the meaning of marking schemes for their course.

Give your answer a structure

Particularly for essay-style questions, remember that a good answer is not always just a list of everything that you know about a subject, but is also a careful argument with a clear structure that addresses the particular question that has been asked about that subject. Concentrate on getting the structure right and making sure you have a clear, well-ordered argument. If the issue concerned is an open one, then sum up the main points for and against the position you are taking and explain the arguments on both sides.

Present your answer clearly and concisely

You don't have much time in an examination, so make your points clearly and concisely. You will not normally receive marks for repeating the same point in many different ways – but you will get marks for demonstrating a complete coverage of all the relevant issues. If necessary, use bullet points to present lists of related information.

Examiners are consistently amazed by how some very long answers can contain almost nothing and some very short answers can contain almost everything!

Legibility

All students are reminded that Examiners place great importance on legibility in examinations. Any script deemed illegible by the Board of Examiners will be assigned a mark of zero and a fail result will be given. This will count as an attempt at the examination. Royal Holloway will not transcribe illegible scripts; therefore students with poor handwriting because

of medical or learning difficulties must apply for special examination arrangements in the usual way (see the pages for students with special needs in the General section).

If English is not your first language

You may worry that you will both read and write more slowly than your colleagues do. Even if this is the case, remember that you get good marks for writing clear, critical and well-organised answers (see the above remarks on being concise). Note that it is not normally a requirement that your answers are in fluent well-punctuated English. However, it is necessary that Examiners can understand the points that you are making. Try to avoid unnecessarily complex and colloquial English phrases, and jargon. Write simply and clearly.

If you are running out of time

Remember to keep checking and, if necessary, revising your initial examination plan. Be aware of the time throughout the examination. If you find that you have spent too much time on early questions, don't panic. Adjust your plan to address the remaining questions as effectively as you can. If you really are running out of time, then it may be wise to quickly look ahead at questions that you have not completed for relatively easy parts that you can answer quickly. It is surprising how many marks you can pick up in only a little time by choosing carefully what to answer. In an essay-style question you might choose to list quickly a number of relevant issues, and then try to expand on them as best you can in the closing minutes.

Examination standards

The standard of the examination for the degrees is the same as that for students studying on campus. Royal Holloway's academic staff are involved in the same way in the setting of question papers and the marking of scripts. No concessions are made for the more difficult study circumstances of distance learning students. You need to be reasonably confident that you have the ability to succeed in an examination before making your entry.

The programme tools and materials

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce you to the various different tools and materials that we are providing you with in order to study the programme. We will explain what you should have received from us in your study pack, the basic features of the VLE and the structure and format of the computer-based study materials.

What to expect and when

This section is intended to tell you the purpose of the various materials you have been sent and how to get the most out of them.

Please make sure that you have received these and that you take the time to examine their content.

Handbook

The *handbook* that you are now reading gives practical advice on how to study, how to solve problems which might arise and where to go for certain types of advice and help. You will also find information related to how you access and use the online learning facility and how you progress through the degree.

Programme Specification and Regulations

The Programme Specification and Regulations document contains the rules by which the degree is run. You should read this document carefully.

Username and password

You will be issued with a username and password to access the VLE. Make sure you keep this in a safe place. When you enter your username and password, please take care to enter it correctly.

The Arts Good Study Guide

We have provided a copy of *The Arts Good Study Guide (AGSG)* for each student. This guide was specially designed by Open University staff for students studying on distance learning programmes and gives very valuable pointers to studying on your own and getting the most from your programme. It is especially useful for people who have been away from formal study for some time or who are not familiar with the British system of academic education. You can use it as an introductory workbook or as a reference whenever you want to refine your learning techniques. It will help you develop study strategies that suit your own needs.

We recommend strongly that you have a look through the AGSG and familiarise yourself with its contents, so that you know what it contains and can go back to it when the occasion arises. You may find that many of the areas covered are not new to you, but you may look up specific topics such as taking notes, writing assignments or preparing for examinations.

The AGSG has a lot of useful tips for successful study – use it.

Textbooks

The *Oxford Classical Dictionary* is a particularly useful book. Everyone on the BA Classical Studies programme will receive this book.

For some courses there may be one or more books that are particularly relevant. These books will be sent to you as part of your study pack.

CD-ROMs

You should have received CD-ROMs containing the study material for the courses that you have registered for. These will allow you to study without connecting to the internet.

The Student Portal

The address of the Portal is:

<http://my.londonexternal.ac.uk>

The Portal is a website that gives you access to online resources that are relevant to you and your programme of study. All you need is the one username and password to access all these resources.

You will be sent your Portal username and password with your study materials. We recommend that you log in as soon as you can.

Once you are logged in you will be able to access:

- your VLE
- your Online Library resources
- your student email account
- your user details
- other useful information.

If you have not received your username and password or require further assistance logging in, please go to

www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current_students/portal/help/loginhelp.shtml

The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

The VLE is like a virtual classroom that the University uses to deliver the content of the BA programme via the internet. It has many resources you need to study and to help you manage your learning. The VLE will allow you to:

- access your course materials
- take part in discussions with the tutor and other students
- receive notices, seminar dates, project support and other programme-related information
- ask questions regarding the administration of the programme
- seek help for technical problems that you encounter.

There are a range of other tools available to you, such as a calendar and a place to add your own personal profile.

To work online you do not need to install the software – you just need to connect to the website via an internet connection.

The programme structure

Levels

The BA Classical Studies programme is structured into three levels, with Level 3 being the most advanced.

The diagram on page 39 illustrates how a level in the BA Classical Studies programme is structured.

Courses

Using Level 1 as an example, we see that each level is made up of different courses from which students choose the required

number for their programme (details are given in the Regulations). Each course will introduce you to the course author and provide you with the overall aims and learning outcomes for that course, as well as a broad overview of the contents. Once you have read this introduction you should have a clear understanding of what the course aims to teach you and you will be ready to start working through the topics.

Each course will also have a conclusion to bring it to a close.

Topics

Each course is then divided into a number of topics. The material presented in a topic roughly corresponds to the amount of material that is presented to students on the campus version of the degree in a single lecture.

Seminars

Some topics have associated seminars which are tutor-led discussions, held at specific times during the time that you are registered for a course.

What does a topic contain?

An online lecture is presented in a very different way from a traditional lecture and it is important that you know what to expect before you begin your studies. Generally speaking, a topic is the equivalent content that a student attending Royal Holloway would receive in one lecture.

A normal topic consists primarily of screens of text. Many people find reading from a screen very difficult and so it might be argued that text is best presented in the form of a document that can be printed off and studied like a book. However, a topic is more than just text, and there are at

least two ways in which it is a much richer experience than reading printed matter:

- Text is presented in a number of different formats that provide more variety and encourage closer engagement with the material than the rather passive activity of reading printed words.
- Text is supported by audio, interactive images, links and tasks.

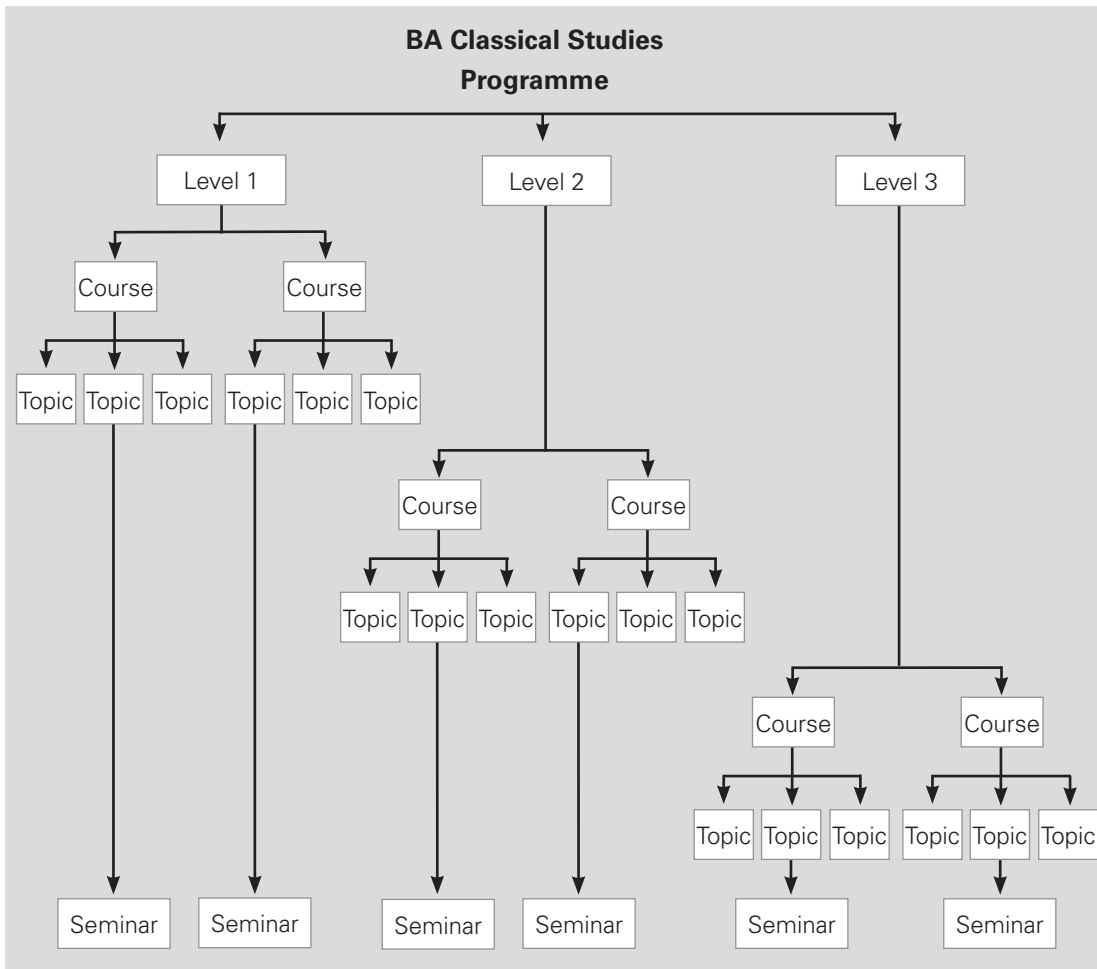
Note that it is possible to print off the majority of text and study it in a more conventional way. You should also note, however, that the material has been written specifically for viewing on screen and that we feel that you will lose some value from not engaging with the material on screen at least once. The choice is entirely yours.

The following is a list of the types of component that you will find in a topic.

Most topics feature these components, but you may find that in some topics not all of them appear.

Topic Introduction

The Topic Introduction sets the topic in context within the rest of the course. It contains a high-level overview of the contents of the topic and may contain special instructions relevant to your study of the topic. The Topic Introduction also lists the main learning outcomes that you are expected to achieve as a result of studying the topic. The Topic Introduction features a 'menu' that lists the titles of the sections within the topic and allows you to link directly to the start of each section.



Study hint: Remember that you can use the aims and learning outcomes to help you set goals. Use the 'menu' to provide headings for your note-taking. Also, when you begin revising you can return to the Introduction screen to look at the aims and learning outcomes in order to ensure that you review all the key points.

Tasks

Tasks are intended to provide you with the opportunity to reflect on and consolidate your learning, or so that you can further explore the topics. Tasks often fall into four different types (although some feature elements of more than one):

- **Reflective exercises** – where you are asked to look back at the topic and collate material or summarise arguments.
- **Discursive exercises** – where you are asked to consider issues that were raised during the topic and provide your opinion or thoughts on them.
- **Investigative exercises** – where you are asked to explore further an issue relating to the topic and seek out more information concerning it.
- **Practical exercises** – where you are asked to conduct a particular activity.

While it may be appropriate to do the tasks at the time that you encounter them, in other cases you may wish to return to them later. The choice is yours.

Summary

The summary screen is an important screen that brings the topic to a close and emphasises the main points that you should have taken from the material in the topic.

How is material presented within a screen?

A screen is a basic page of text. A screen is rather more than a page in a book however, as it may present information in many different ways.

We now look briefly at some of the different ways in which information is presented on screen in a topic. We also introduce some of the basic icons that are used to indicate specific actions or activities.

Text

The main way we present information on screen is using text. You could think of this text as equivalent to what an academic says in a normal lecture: it introduces the key points for the topic and points you towards further reading, research, tasks and so on.

Sometimes you have to select the text to reveal further information. The purpose of this is to present relatively large amounts of information in a more compact and structured way.

Sometimes you have to select a question to reveal the answer. Questions posed in this way are meant to be questions that

you pause and think about before looking at the answer.

To get the most from these, you should not reveal the answer until you have had time to contemplate the question that has been posed.

Note that most questions asked in this way are not ones that you are already expected to know the answer to when you view the material for the first time. You should, however, be able to make an intelligent guess at an answer to them first time around.

Questions to think about

On some screens you will see a 'question mark' icon next to a question. This icon indicates that your lecturer wishes you to reflect carefully on that question as you are working through the topic.

Question

On other screens you will see a 'Q' icon next to a question. These will be accompanied by an answer button to select (see below for icons).

Study hint: It is a good idea to write these questions down and make some notes about them. This may help you later when you are writing an essay or contributing to an online seminar

Resource sites

For certain topics you will be required to read information from external websites. In such cases you will see a 'Resource site' button. This button will open up a new window in your browser to show you a web page owned by another organisation which contains material relevant to the topic you are studying.

When you click on a 'Resource site' link, you will leave the Royal Holloway, University of London programme website. Royal Holloway, University of London does not take any responsibility for the information contained on the external website.

Source texts

In some cases you will be required to read a particular text from a book or journal. Often we provide you with an electronic version of these source texts and in such cases you will see a 'Read source' button. This button will open up a new window in your browser enabling you to see a book chapter, journal article or document. The icons next to the 'Read source' button will provide information about the reading – see below for details:

Required reading

The 'Required reading' icon indicates that the tutor has identified this as obligatory reading for the topic that you are studying.

Extra reading

The 'Extra reading' icon indicates that you do not have to read this text; it is provided as additional reading.

PDF

The 'PDF' icon indicates that the reading you are about to look at is in Adobe PDF format. You will need to have the free Adobe Acrobat reader software loaded to view such documents. You will be able to download this from our website.

Word

The 'Word' icon indicates that the reading you are about to look at is in Microsoft Word format.

Core reading

The 'Core reading' icon indicates that the tutor would like you to read the specified sections from one of your set textbooks.

Read more

The 'Read more' button links to a pop-up window which contains further related information prepared by the course lecturer.

Case study

The 'Case study' button links to a pop-up box containing further information and examples.

Task

The 'Task' icon indicates that the tutor would like you to complete a task relating to this material. These tasks may range from note taking to essay writing and may be for your own reference or to share with your peers or tutor.

Exercise

The 'Exercise' icon indicates that there is an exercise for you to undertake.

Examples

In cases where the task is quite difficult, your lecturer may provide an example or possible answer so that you can get a clear understanding of what is expected before you attempt the task. In such cases you will see a 'See example' or 'Possible answer' button – simply select this and an example will appear in a new window.

Questions with model answers

Sometimes it is important that you can check your understanding of a task you have attempted. In such cases you will find a 'Model answer' button. **After** you

have attempted the task, you should select this button and you will get further information and guidance about how to answer the task. It is important to remember that a 'Model answer' is not the only possible correct answer; it is meant to be an example of how you might have completed the task. Within an animation the 'A' button might be used to access the 'Model answer' material.

Study aid

Where the task requires you to produce information in a specific format or to answer a large number of questions, you will usually be provided with a 'Study aid'. This is simply a document that has been laid out in the appropriate way – you just have to save it and type your answers into it.

Quizzes

In certain topics you will need to learn and remember a lot of factual information. In these topics you will find quizzes that are designed to check how well you remember the important facts. These quizzes usually consist of multiple-choice and gap-filling questions. Once you have completed the quiz you can select the 'Submit' button to reveal the correct answers.

Study hint: You can use the tasks and quizzes again to test yourself when you are revising.

Discussion

The 'Discussion' icon indicates where the course author believes that you would benefit from discussing the issues raised in the course materials with your peers. There is a discussion area in the VLE for each course.

Images, maps and diagrams

Images, maps and diagrams are used to reinforce or help explain the written material. For example, if the text describes the region where a certain event took place, there will be a 'See map' button on the screen – by selecting this button you will be able to see a map of the area in question.

Audio

Audio is also used to reinforce learning, to bring accounts to life or to deliver material from a guest lecturer. The 'Audio' button indicates that there is something to listen to and when you click on it you will hear a short piece of audio recording. There will always be a text equivalent of any audio clips.

Hear more

The 'Hear more' button links to a pop-up box with further related audio files.

Text equivalent

The 'Text equivalent' button will link to a text equivalent of a flash animation.

Text only

The 'Text only' button will link to a plain-text version of the web page that does not contain graphics or animations.

Animations

Where appropriate there are animations or interactive content to reinforce your learning. For example, you may have to click on parts of a diagram to reveal explanations of its various parts. To view and use the animations you will need to download the Adobe Flash plug-in. You will be able to download this from our website before you begin your studies.

Prompt

A prompt consists of a couple of sentences appearing in bold that invite you to perform a specific action (e.g. opening a window, visiting a resource).

Using the study materials

Each topic can be thought of as a 'study guide' that directs you through an amount of course content. At various stages the text will suggest that you stop reading and conduct some other activities, such as reading another source book, listening to an audio clip or performing a specific task. Exactly how you choose to use this material, and how much time you spend conducting exercises, tasks and Further reading, is really up to you.

General resources

The study materials provide you with access to digitised book chapters and journal articles, as well as to digital images, charts, maps and links to external websites. All of these will be embedded within the lecture and seminar material.

The resources provided will reflect the essential texts that you must read in order to be able to complete the courses successfully.

Where possible, additional reading materials have also been provided within the VLE; and where this is not possible then detailed lists of these (in-print and readily available) resources are given so that you can locate them elsewhere. A list of bookshops that students have found useful can be found on our website at:

www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current_students/general_resources/

Please also refer to the General section for more information on bookshops.

Senate House Library, University of London

As an International Programmes student you are entitled, while living in or visiting the UK, to use the University Library. The library charges for this service. For more information see the General section or contact:

Senate House Library
Senate House
Malet Street
London
WC1E 7HU
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7862 8461/62
Fax: +44 (0)20 7862 8480
Web address: www.shl.london.ac.uk
Email: OnlineLibrary@shl.london.ac.uk

Other libraries

You may also be able to use other university or local libraries both in the United Kingdom and overseas. We will provide a certificate of registration to students on request if the library requires it. Some information on libraries is given in the General section of this *handbook*.

The Online Library

An Online Library has been developed for International Programmes students. There is an individual homepage for each qualification within the International Programmes. The Online Library homepage for your programme is:

www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/index.php?id=rh

Online Library Tour

To help you to find your way around the Online Library it will be useful for you to take the Online Library Tour:

www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/help/tour.php

The tour should only take you five minutes to complete but will save you a lot of time in the future!

Databases and electronic journals

The Online Library provides access to a wide variety of databases, many of which contain full-text electronic journals and E-books. You can browse or search the full list of the Online Library's databases from the databases page:

www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/res/databases.php?id=rh

Here are some of the major databases that the Online Library provides:

- **Academic Search Complete** – Updated daily Academic Search Complete is a multi-disciplinary database with full text coverage of 7,900 full-text periodicals, including more than 6,800 peer-reviewed journals.
- **Dawson's E-book Collection** – The Online Library has purchased several core text books in electronic format, and the collection is constantly growing.
- **JSTOR** – full-text journals across a broad range of subject areas including classical studies, economics, education, finance, history, mathematics, political science, sociology and statistics.

- **Lexis®Library** – although primarily a database containing full-text case law and legislation for the United Kingdom, USA (Federal and State), EU and other jurisdictions, it also provides access to national and local United Kingdom newspapers.
- **Web of knowledge** – ISI Web of Knowledge delivers easy access to high quality scholarly information in the sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities. This includes free access to My EndNote Web reference management.

The Online Library Team has developed introductory or Quick Start Guides for each of the databases to help you learn to use them effectively:

www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/pdf

Accessing the Online Library

For up-to-date information about accessing the Online Library please go to:

www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/index.php?id=rh

Summon

Summon is the new Online Library Google-like search engine that provides fast, relevancy-ranked results through a single search box. Use Summon to find the full text of journal articles by typing the article title into the Summon search box. To find out more about Summon go here.

www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/summon/about.php

If you are interested in a particular journal use the Full Text Electronic Journal List.

<http://zk6qc5fe9p.search.serialssolutions.com/>

Passwords for accessing the Online Library

Together with your study materials, you will receive a letter with your Portal username and password. With this same username and password you will be able to access most e-journals and library databases. This means that you only need one password for the Portal, VLE and for most Online Library databases.

To access the Online Library, log in to the Portal, and then select the 'Library' tab. A new window will take you to the Online Library gateway. The 'Databases' link will take you to a list of databases relevant to your programme. There is a login guide next to each database link to help you with the login procedure. You will find further information about accessing the Online Library databases at:

www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/help/databases

Some journals will also require you to have an Athens username and password.

For an Athens account request, please go to:

www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/res/request.php

Your personal Athens account will be renewed by the Online Library team in December each year while you are a registered International Programmes student.

Support for using the Library

If you have any problems, please send an enquiry to the Online Library Team. To help them answer your enquiry efficiently, please include as much detail as possible. The Online Library Team is available between 0900 and 1700 (GMT) Monday to Friday.

You can send your enquiries by email to the generic University support email:

uolia.support@london.ac.uk

and a specialist librarian will get back to you within two working days. Enquiries can also be sent by filling in a web form found at:

www.external.shl.london.ac.uk/help/enquiries/index.php

or by telephone : +44 (0) 20 7862 8478

Email replies from the Online Library Enquiries Service are sometimes interpreted as junk mail (spam) by filters. This means you might miss our reply to you, particularly if you are using Hotmail or AOL. To avoid frustration, if you are using a junk mail filter, please set it to allow email from:

OnlineLibrary@shl.lon.ac.uk.

The Help Desk

Although the Online Library Team will aim to answer your enquiry within two working days, you may be able to find the information you need instantly in the Online Library Help Desk:

www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/help/

Feedback or suggestions?

If you would like to suggest a resource or have any ideas as to how the Online Library can be improved, please let the Online Library Team know:

www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/contact/

Internet and computer requirements

In order to take advantage of the benefits of the Portal, as well as to keep up to date with the news and information about your programme, you should have access to a computer with an internet connection. The specifications that we recommend are listed below. As well as improving access to information and study resources, the website and VLE can also help you feel part of the student community.

To use the Portal and the online resources it provides, you will need:

- a computer with internet access
- a web browser – Internet Explorer 6.0 or later, or Firefox 2.0 or later
- it to be Javascript enabled
- it to be Cookies enabled
- Adobe Reader (to download study resources and help material)
- Adobe Flash Player 7.0 or later (to view movies).

As with all websites, the higher the bandwidth of your internet connection, the smoother your experience of the Portal will be.

The list below gives the minimum specifications for a computer capable of running the course materials and accessing the VLE:

Hardware

Processor	Pentium 266
Memory (RAM)	64Mb
Operating system	Microsoft Windows 98 or above
Free space on hard disk	1Gig
Screen resolution	800 x 600, 16 bit colour
CD/DVD-ROM drive	CD-ROM
Graphics card	4 Mb
Sound card and speakers	

Support

If you require any help accessing your Portal/VLE, please go to:

www.londonexternal.ac.uk/current_students/portal/help/loginhelp.shtml

For any other queries, please see the FAQs:

www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current_students/portal/help/contact_support.shtml

(this link can also be found at the bottom of the Portal login page).

We will try to respond to your query within two working days; however, this may be longer during busy periods and holidays.

Academic support

There will be times when you wish that you had someone nearby to talk to about the content of the programme. In fact we would strongly suggest that you make a conscious effort to try to talk to as many people as you can about the content of the programme. **To a large extent, the quality of your experience studying this programme will depend on the amount of contact that you have with other students and tutors.**

We will do what we can to help you in this respect, but it will primarily be up to you to take advantage of what is available. In this chapter we look at how you can use the available resources most effectively.

Note that this chapter concerns academic support: how to get help with understanding Classics and related programme content. The chapter 'Administrative and technical support' explains how to obtain technical or administrative support: how to get help with access problems or issues concerning progression, registration, personal difficulties, problems with studying, etc.

Please do not confuse these different types of support. There is nothing that will irritate your fellow students or tutors more than inappropriately posted questions about your computing problems, the VLE, course registration requests, etc.

Obtaining academic support

While you may choose to study this programme entirely on your own, there are many reasons why it is a good idea to try to communicate with others as often as you can:

- Understanding study material. The chapter: 'What to do if you get into difficulties' includes a brief step-by-step guide on how to proceed when you don't understand some study material.
- Covering missed issues. Discussing study material with others often brings to light issues and subtleties that you did not pick up on when studying on your own.
- Obtaining the 'big picture'. Comparing the views of other people, especially on subjective issues, helps to create a better understanding of all the complexities of a subject and the different opinions that exist concerning it.
- Joining a community. Interacting with other people and sharing information is normally a very positive experience and allows you to become part of an online community. In this way you will meet like-minded people, which will not just be an interesting experience in itself and help you to overcome isolation as a distance learner, but in many cases it will lead to the establishment of friendships and contacts which may be beneficial to you during and after the completion of your studies.

We now look at each of the different ways in which you can engage in online networking and communication on this programme. These are:

- online seminars
- course tutors
- peer-to-peer support
- student café.

When using any of these online support methods, please make sure that you follow good online communication practice – see page 54.

Online seminars

All of the courses on the BA Classical Studies programme feature a number of online seminars.

What are online seminars?

Online seminars are regular, formal discussions that will be moderated by a tutor. As a general rule, you will be expected to participate in between three and seven online seminars for every course that you study. The seminars will take place on set dates and will last for a set amount of time, usually about two weeks. A notice about the dates for the online seminars will be put in the VLE as well as the calendar. **Make sure you check the notices regularly for any course-related information.**

The tutor has picked key themes or skills that they wish to discuss with you in the online seminar and you will be expected both to prepare for and participate in the discussions. Please note that the tutors have chosen each seminar topic for a very specific reason: they may be crucial to your understanding of a particular topic or help you to prepare for an assignment or examination question.

The materials and resources that you need in order to prepare for each seminar are provided well in advance of the scheduled start date. You may need to read and make notes from several documents, or prepare a report or written piece of work. We advise that you integrate your preparation

for the seminars with your study of the course topics. After all, the seminars will be related to those topics! Take a look at the seminar material well in advance of the seminar start date. Note the amount of reading required, the questions you will be discussing and build this into your plan of study of the relevant course topics.

The tutor's role is to facilitate the seminars to make sure that you get the maximum benefit from them. This means that they will work with you to help you reach the right conclusions; they will not simply give you answers to the questions they pose.

Why do we need to have seminars?

Online seminars are a key part of our online programme and are an alternative to the activities that are undertaken in a tutorial session on campus. The amount you can learn from participating in them should not be underestimated.

The online seminars have been designed to build on and reinforce the themes that you are reading about and to make you reflect on and analyse the course materials. They provide you with an opportunity to check that you have understood the theories and concepts that have been introduced.

Below we list some of the ways that online seminars can benefit your learning:

- **An opportunity to check on your learning**

One reason for including online seminars is to provide you with an opportunity to check that you have understood the theories and concepts that have been introduced in your reading material. Where you have not understood, the tutor can provide you

with feedback and explanations that can help you to better understand the issues.

- **An opportunity to interact with a tutor and your peers**

This is your opportunity to discuss the course with your tutor – this makes the distance learning process more personal. The seminars give the tutor/lecturer the opportunity to find out whether you and your peers understand the material you are studying and they will structure their input into the seminar accordingly.

The seminars also give you an opportunity to learn from your fellow participants. Taking part in the seminars gives you the chance to discuss and explore the key themes from each course with a range of people with different backgrounds, knowledge and perspectives. Learning does not just involve reading books and taking in what the tutor says; it is also important to learn from your peers as you would if you were attending an on-campus course. Communicating with your peers in this way may also help with any feelings of isolation you experience.

- **Develop your 'virtual' communication skills**

The importance of virtual communication tools such as discussion boards is growing, and being able to use such tools effectively is seen as an increasingly important skill.

The online seminars provide you with an opportunity to develop your 'virtual' communication skills as you will need to communicate and discuss your ideas with the rest of the group in an asynchronous environment.

- **Motivation**

As we mentioned earlier, staying motivated is one of the challenges of doing an online course. We also mentioned the importance of setting yourself goals – online seminars might provide you with some ready-made ones. As you will need to prepare for three to seven seminars per course, you could add them to your calendar and structure your study habits around them. This may help you to remain focused.

Why are they timetabled?

It is necessary to run online seminars for fixed periods of time between fixed dates in order to focus participants on conducting a particular set of tasks. Setting dates is necessary in order to guarantee that students will be addressing the same issue at the same time, and that a tutor will be present to guide the discussion for the duration of the online seminar. Seminars will normally run for two weeks, thus allowing you enough time to contribute when it suits you, while short enough for the discussion to remain focused and dynamic.

If you cannot participate in an online seminar for any reason, the seminar will still be accessible for you to read when you are next able to return to your studies.

If you wish to continue discussions beyond the end of an online seminar, or run your own similar discussions outside the seminar period, then you may do so. The only difference is that such discussions are not formally part of the programme, and they may not receive such close attention from a tutor. However, you are strongly encouraged to use online seminars as a model for your own peer-to-peer discussions (see the section on the previous page 'An opportunity to interact with a tutor and your peers').

How do you make the most of online seminars?

To put it simply, you can make the most of the seminars by **preparing** and **participating** to the best of your ability. Do not be afraid to put forward your thoughts and opinions – this is an opportunity for you to learn and to get feedback on your ideas; you are not expected to have all the answers, but you are expected to take online seminars seriously. Please make sure that you understand the technical operation of the discussion areas within the VLE and that you follow good online communication practice when posting messages (see pages 54–57).

Do you have to participate in online seminars?

The online seminars are held to help you enhance your understanding of the programme. Students are recommended to make use of all sources of help on this programme, and online seminars are no exception.

Note that all students can access online seminars, but it is possible that some students do not participate in them by posting messages. The maxim 'the

more you put in, the more you get out' is particularly true of online seminars. By participating in an online seminar you can enrich the discussion, have your own ideas commented on by others, and direct discussions to issues that you are particularly interested in. However, by far the most important reason for participating in an online seminar is that by being directly involved, you will definitely gain a better understanding of the topic of the seminar than if you remain a quiet observer of the discussion of others.

How are online seminars supported?

There is a tutor assigned to every course. It is quite likely that you will have a different tutor for each course that you register for.

The role of the tutor is to guide and moderate your online seminars during the support period for that course. This means that during the online seminars for that course, the tutor will be reading your postings to the online seminars and will be both directing and commenting on the activities within the seminars.

During each seminar, you should consider the tutor to be the 'leader' of the discussion that takes place, not a personal adviser from whom you can request any programme-related information.

You should interact with the tutor only:

- **concerning the topic under discussion in the online seminar**
- **through the online seminar itself.**

On the other hand, during the online seminar **please do not:**

- Ask the tutor course-specific questions that have nothing to do with the

seminar topic – these should be directed to the course discussion area.

- Email the course tutor directly (in most cases they will probably request that you post your question or comment to either the online seminar or the course discussion area anyway).
- Ask the course tutor to answer administrative and technical support questions.
- Ask the course tutor to answer academic questions relating to other courses, unless they are of direct relevance to issues under discussion in the online seminar. Please use the support facilities for these other courses to have such questions addressed.

How much support will we get during online seminars?

This will depend on what support you need and the nature of the activity that you are undertaking. In all teaching experiences, groups and individuals need different levels of interaction. Sometimes a tutor can sit quietly and allow the students to make progress; sometimes discussion wanders from the topic and the tutor will need to intervene more. For each seminar, the tutor will be a presence who will provide some feedback to the group to allow you some idea of how you have done. They may also decide to help an individual outside the context of the seminar (giving some private encouragement), or provide some ideas that the group has missed.

Course discussion areas

Although you are a distance learner, it is important to remember that you are part of a learning community, as you would be if you were studying on-campus. We would encourage you to work with and support each other as much as possible.

Both the material you will be studying and the VLE have been designed to give you the opportunity to get to know each other and to share ideas with your peers. It is **your** responsibility to take this opportunity and exploit it to your advantage.

Discussing the topics and themes and any difficulties you may have with your fellow students will help motivate you, decrease any feelings of isolation and perhaps open your eyes to aspects of the material you may have missed.

Each course has its own dedicated discussion area, open to all students who have registered for that course. In general, each topic will have one theme that you should discuss with your peers. However, you may start your own discussions if there is a theme or idea that you particularly want to discuss with them.

Course discussion areas are made available for academic, topic-related discussions. Although tutors will not be 'leading' any discussions in the course discussion area (this is what online seminars are for) the discussion areas are monitored, which means that course tutors will be checking the discussions regularly to ensure that posted information is correct and that discussion area protocols are being observed. Course tutors may also choose to post messages relating to the course content if they feel

that discussions require input from them.

However, you should not expect that all questions posted to course discussion areas will be answered by a course tutor.

Course discussion areas are especially useful for exploring complex ideas with your peers over an extended period of time. They give you an opportunity to discuss your ideas and thoughts with your peers in a relaxed environment. If you are having problems understanding a particular point, you can also use this forum to ask your peers for help, just as you might ask fellow students on campus. The course discussion area is part of your campus. **However, you must remember that your peers may not always be able to post replies immediately to your questions or thoughts, so remember to check the board regularly.**

You should feel free to post course-related information or questions to the Course discussion area. It is preferable to use this facility (rather than email) for course content-related discussions with fellow students as this will mean that a greater number of people will benefit from and be able to contribute to the discussion.

As with online seminars, please make sure that you understand the technical operation of the discussion areas within the VLE and that you follow good online communication practice when posting messages (see pages 54–57).

Course tutors

As well as leading the online seminars, the course tutor will be available to support the course from the time you

register for that course through to the time of your examination (this includes times outside the periods when online seminars are running).

Course tutors will assist your study of the course in two different ways:

Answering academic questions

You may ask your own academic course-related questions of the course tutor by using the facility available in the VLE. Any question asked will be completely private – other students won't be able to see what you have written.

You are asked to:

- **use this service selectively – please use the course discussion area in the first instance**
- **restrict questions to those concerning course-specific content only.**

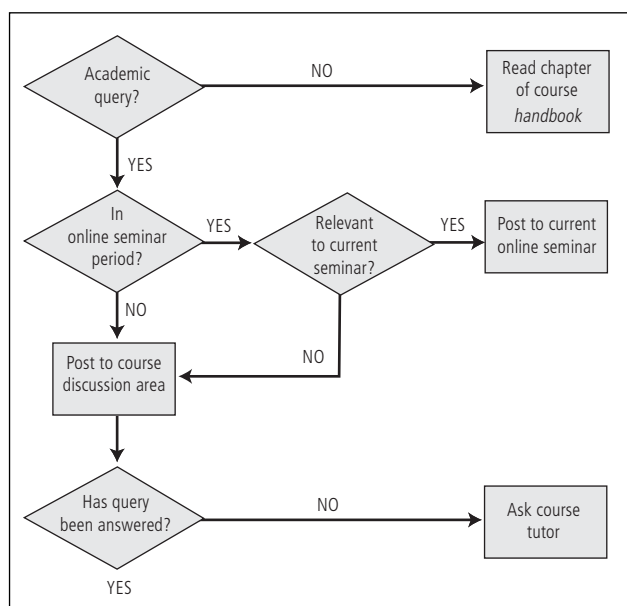
You should not:

- ask the course tutor a question that has already been dealt with in the course discussion area
- ask the course tutor a question that could just as easily have been placed in the course discussion area (if you do so, then they may simply tell you to place the question in the course discussion area yourself)
- ask the course tutor too many questions
- ask the course tutor to answer administrative and technical support questions
- ask the course tutor to answer academic questions relating to

other courses. Instead, to have such questions addressed, please use the support facilities for these other courses.

Summary of tutor support

The following flowchart summarises the order of precedence of support you can expect to receive for academic queries. Please refer to it when deciding where to direct a query that arises as part of your course-related study.



Student café

We are aware that learning is not always just about studying and discussing study materials – socialising can also be an important aspect of education. We have provided you with a ‘place’ to socialise with your peers in the VLE as we feel it is important for you to build friendships with your fellow distance learners. You can use the student café area to discuss among yourselves, your hobbies, your work and so on.

Please try to avoid the use of the student café for course-specific discussions that could be more appropriately held in the course discussion area.

Feel free to use the student café for work-related discussions that do not clearly belong in any course discussion area.

Using the student café will probably help you to feel less isolated as you will also be able to discuss any challenges or frustrations you may be experiencing as a distance learner. Your fellow students will probably understand your feelings much better than your family and friends and they might be able to provide some really useful advice. You can give each other moral support and provide a sense of community as you might in a traditional university setting. This can make logging on to the programme website a much ‘warmer’ experience – you are not just looking at study materials; you are interacting with your peers.

Socialising with your peers in this informal way should also make you more confident about contributing to the formal programme-related discussions. If you know the people you are talking to, you may find it easier to express an opinion.

Your responsibility

Any form of education requires the student to make a certain level of commitment in order for it to be successful. Online distance learning may be more flexible than an on-campus degree programme but it still requires you to take responsibility for your own learning. You must be committed and you should use the academic support

tools at your disposal to their full potential, so that the programme is a rich and positive learning experience. For example, failing to contribute to an online seminar is the equivalent of missing a lecture or tutorial and it will impact on your learning. You should also remember that the tutors are there to guide and facilitate your learning, not to do it for you.

Good online communication practice

People who use email and online discussion boards have developed certain conventions and rules over the years. This has become known as network etiquette or 'netiquette'. Many of these conventions may already be familiar to you, and many others are just plain common sense.

Following the guidelines below will make people more likely to respect you online, and help to facilitate your online communications and study.

Breaches of these guidelines may also result in action from the programme administrators that could ultimately affect your progress on the degree.

Respect for others

The most important point when communicating online is that you show respect for your fellow students and tutors. Do not use offensive language or insults at any time. Please show respect for cultural and religious differences when expressing your opinions. Remember that when you send an online communication to a discussion area, you do not know exactly who will read it, or if it will be printed or copied, or sent to other people. So be polite. A good thing to bear in mind is that

if you write about another person, then you can expect that at some time in the future it is possible that person may read what you wrote.

Tone

Capital letters are considered to be the equivalent of SHOUTING, but may be used with care. You can highlight words by doing *this*. Some responses may sound rude if they are too terse or short, or you may send out a message in haste, and it may be misinterpreted. Never post messages or emails when angry or upset – a good idea is to sleep on it.

Humour

Research has shown that the use of jokes and humour does help people to learn effectively. However, it is important to remember that on this programme you will be part of an international learning community, and that something that may be humorous in your culture may not be funny to somebody from another culture. It is therefore important that you are sure that your peers will understand and appreciate the humour in any jokes or ironic comments that you make. Without inflections of voice and body language it is easy for a humorous remark in a message to be misinterpreted. Subtle humour tends to get lost, so take steps to make sure that people realise you are trying to be funny. See the section entitled 'Language shortcuts' for more information on techniques that can help to make it clear when you are making a joke.

Writing

Online communications have evolved to be less formal than letters. They often include jargon or slang terms (especially computer-related terms) and abbreviations. (See 'Language shortcuts' below.)

When you are communicating informally (such as in an email or using the student café) it may be fine to treat online discussions like a verbal conversation and let your thoughts flow quickly – you do not need to go back to correct mistakes in grammar, spelling, or the logical sequence of your message. However, when you are participating in the online seminars and posting to course discussion areas, then you should be more careful about the grammar, spelling, and presentation of your message (see 'Posting to discussion areas' on page 57).

Language shortcuts

Emoticons ('emotional icons') can be used in online communication in order to prevent misunderstandings and to express feelings. Examples of popular emoticons include:

:-) smiling

:-(frowning or looking sad

;-) winking

:-o shock or surprise.

Other language shortcuts that you might want to use are acronyms that are used in place of common phrases, which take a long time to type. Some examples are:

AFAIK as far as I know

IIRC if I remember correctly

IMHO in my humble opinion

LOL laughing out loud (beware: also 'lots of love'!)

ROTFL rolling on the floor laughing.

You can find more extensive lists of emoticons and acronyms on Dr Internet's website:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/emoticon>

Please restrict your use of all language shortcuts in course discussion areas and online seminars to a very few well understood ones.

Dates and times

In the UK we often write dates as day/month/year in numbers (for example, 11th April 2002 = 11/04/02), but other parts of the world write month/day/year and would read the date 11/04/02 as November 4th 2002. Please try to remember to write dates in a clear format such as 11-Apr-02 that spells out the month in order to avoid such confusion.

It is also a good idea to avoid using words like 'today', 'tomorrow' and 'yesterday' and to use the date instead – remember that people may be in different time-zones and that it may already be 'tomorrow' where they are. You should also remember that people will be participating in the discussions over an extended time period and may not read your message until several days or even weeks after you have posted it.

Please also bear in mind the difference in time zones when making any precise arrangements with students from different parts of the world (deadlines for posting a contribution, sending an email, etc.)

Name

You should include your name at the end of any communication.

Formatting

The person who reads your message may be using a different computer system from you. A message sent using, for example, a Japanese email program to another Japanese system will be able to send Japanese characters, but if such a message is received on another system it may be unreadable.

There is a minimum common standard for online communications: send plain text. Formatting like bold, underline, and italic will not be understood by all systems. Even different fonts may cause problems. Try to view and write your communications using a fixed spaced font like Courier. In this font each character and space has the same width and columns of text, numbers and spaces line up on top of each other.

Avoid using special or extended characters. For example, the £ sign may be turned into # when viewed using a different computer. Also keep your line length to around 65–70 characters in messages. Some computer systems do not wrap long lines, so your message will disappear off the right of the screen when someone else opens it to read it on their computer system.

Attachments

It is possible to include attachments in most forms of online communication (this includes postings to discussion areas). During online seminars the tutor may ask you to post answers to tasks. Please only attach files that have been created in widely used applications – otherwise the tutor and your peers may not be able to read them.

Viruses

Please take care to use basic virus hygiene controls on your computer and to check attachments and anything you download for viruses. If you think you've got a virus, then try to find out if you got it from an email attachment or program, and warn the person who sent it to you. Do not assume that everyone you sent email to has caught the virus.

Remember that it is going to look very embarrassing if you are the source of a computer virus on any courseware. Make sure that it does not happen!

Discussion area netiquette

The following netiquette issues apply particularly to the use of discussion areas and online seminars.

Posting to discussion areas

The key point when writing a message is clarity – ask yourself if everyone who may read your message will understand you. We advise you to do the following when participating in any programme-related discussion in a discussion area or as part of an online seminar:

- Write in English.
- Write in proper sentences (although grammar and spelling need not be perfect).
- Spell out any abbreviations when first used in the message you are writing; for example, Royal Holloway, University of London (RHUL).
- Put the message into context (i.e. quote part of the original message you are replying to if it helps place your question or response in context).

- Do not quote all of the original message you are replying to unless it is absolutely necessary.
- If you are starting a new discussion, make sure that you are in the correct area of the discussion area and name your discussion according to the course and topic concerned.
- Do not write in capitals – it is viewed as SHOUTING.
- **Think twice.**

While we want to encourage you to use discussion areas and post to online seminars as much as possible, don't get too enthusiastic – always just make a quick check before finally posting a message. Make sure your contribution is relevant to the topic. For example, try to avoid the classic post 'I agree', and adopt a more informative 'I agree because ...'.

Checking the board regularly

Remember that the online discussions and online seminars are asynchronous – they do not take place live. People will be adding to the discussions over at least a two-week period so do not expect an instant reply to the messages that you post; it is important that you get into the habit of checking the discussion area regularly. For example, you could decide to give yourself one hour, three times a week, to look at the discussion area. If you give yourself scheduled times to read and add to the discussion area, you are more likely to participate effectively and efficiently in the discussions.

You should also remember that people will be studying things at different rates, so you may need to wait a while for a non-moderated discussion on a particular topic

to get going. However, even if you have moved on to something else, when the discussion gets going, you should try to participate as it will serve as revision.

Email

The following further netiquette rules apply particularly to the use of email.

Junk email

Please do not proliferate the sending of junk email amongst fellow students of the programme. In particular, do not under any circumstances:

- Distribute unsolicited email to fellow students concerning advertising material.
- Post any messages to fellow students relating to pyramid schemes or money-making scams.
- Proliferate chain letters, such as those that claim that if you send an email to a number of other people, good luck will come to you, but if you do not send it then you will get bad luck.
- Use email addresses of students on the programme to distribute online petitions.

If you receive unsolicited email of any of these types, then the best thing to do is delete it straightaway. If you suspect any students on the programme of being the source of unsolicited email messages then contact the programme administrators (see Contacts pages).

Space in your mailbox

Please remember that it is your responsibility to leave sufficient space at all times in your mailbox to receive emails and attachments from us.

What to do if you get into difficulties

This short chapter summarises some advice on what to do if you encounter serious difficulties during your studies. The most important things are to address problems early and not to panic! Most types of problem that you may encounter will not be unique to you, and many other students may have been faced with similar difficulties in the past. Based on these past experiences, here are some suggestions on how to address or seek support in dealing with common problems.

Your family doesn't understand

Ideally your family and partner are behind you all the way and, in theory, they are very supportive. But small difficulties can quickly build up into genuine problems – for example, you rarely help with the dishes or with the children, you don't want to go out in the evening, the little jobs around the house remain undone for too long, etc.

Probably the best way to avoid this is to negotiate time for studying and time for family and friends – and keep to it. When a problem arises, you need to go back and review the arrangements you have made – are you keeping your side of the bargain? What compromise could you make to keep everyone happy? When examinations are approaching, you need to explain to everyone that you need to spend more time studying, but then plan to spend extra time with them when the examinations are finished.

Your employer isn't supportive

If you are combining work and study you may find that your employer is initially supportive, but is later reluctant to spare you sufficient time to study or to attend examinations. This can lead to conflicting and stressful pressures on your time.

If your employer is co-operating with your studies (perhaps even paying for the programme), then it is definitely in their interest to help you to succeed. The most important thing you can do is to make it clear to your employer exactly how much time you will need and at what periods of the year you are particularly under pressure. Plan your needs out carefully in advance with the co-operation of your employer (don't surprise them with last-minute requests for time off – make sure you give plenty of notice and ask them well in advance for any time off that you may require).

Planning your studies may also involve making arrangements to catch up on any work with which you are falling behind, gently reminding your boss of the advantages to the organisation of having you complete the programme and applying your new skills and knowledge for the benefit of all. The nature of your employment may simply necessitate that sometimes you have to shoulder a higher workload than usual. For a while, your study time may have to accommodate problems at work, but in exchange it seems only fair that you be given compensatory time when such bottleneck periods are past.

Some of you may have less co-operative employers, or may even have chosen not to inform your employer that you are studying this programme. This does make life more difficult when the two activities start to clash in their demands on your time. If there is very little that you can do about pressures from the workplace then you may simply have to consider taking lighter study loads and also be prepared to sacrifice some of your holidays or leisure time in order to complete your studies.

You can't find the time to study

Finding the time to study and maintaining study schedules can be a real problem for some students. This is where, as a distance learning student, you may have to work hard to improve your personal discipline and efficiency.

If you have problems finding time to study, then it is well worth reviewing your weekly schedule to see if there aren't some small changes in lifestyle that could result in a few hours being gained each week for study. Sometimes these can be surprisingly simple to find. For example, could you use any time spent commuting by bus or train to do some study? Could you revise your weekly employment schedule to arrange a day working at home each week, thus saving some commuting time, which could then be used for study? Could you use your lunch hour to study? Could you alter your sleeping times to take advantage of quiet moments when no one else is awake at home?

Another way of recovering some time is to try to study more efficiently. There are no prescriptive rules for efficient study because it comes down to your own personality and study skills. However, many of the study skills discussed earlier in this *handbook*, and in *The Arts Good Study Guide*, should help you to become more efficient with your time.

You fall behind

If you fall behind the pace at which you have chosen to study this programme, or something unexpected happens that puts you seriously behind your study schedule (such as work commitments, an illness or an accident), then you have several options.

Putting in an extra effort in order to get back on schedule is one option, although this might be impractical if the delay has been significant.

Revising your schedule is perhaps a more feasible alternative. This might involve delaying the taking of an examination or adjusting your entire study schedule to a slower pace – perhaps deciding to take an extra year to complete, for example.

If you have fallen behind because you did not give yourself a fixed study schedule or set yourself specific goals, you should try to do this now. Having prearranged deadlines and milestones might give you the impetus and discipline you need to finish.

If you do find you are having difficulties and are not sure what to do, then ask us for advice (see Contacts section).

You don't understand the study materials

If you don't understand the study materials then there are several different ways in which you are advised to proceed.

As a rough guide, consider the following actions in order of priority:

If you are stuck with a particular issue or explanation, then it is occasionally the case that you are simply too tired and just need a rest – so take a break, get some fresh air, and come back to it later. You might also be able to move on to the next topic and then return to the troublesome one later. However, if you still have problems, then you will need to take some further action.

Take a look at alternative descriptions or explanations in other resources, such as programme texts or internet sites. It may be that you have been confused by the presentation of the material and that a different description is all that it takes to clarify the issue for you.

Having established that you cannot solve the problem yourself, there are several different academic support mechanisms that you can use to get assistance.

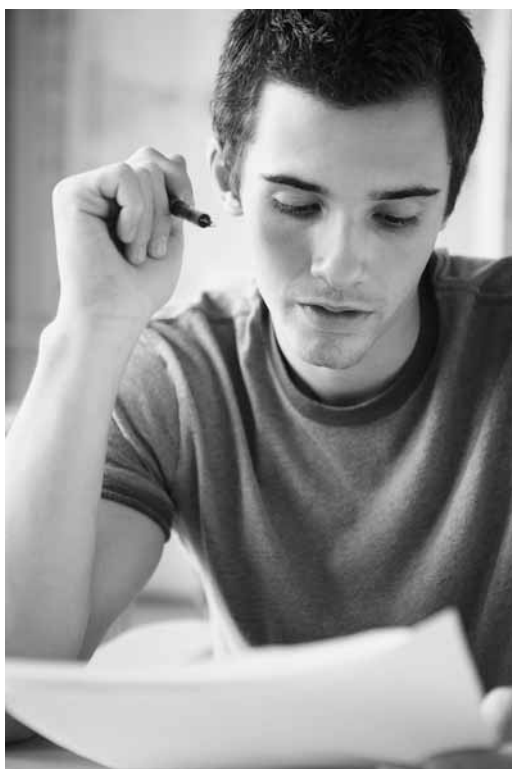
These include asking fellow students or contacting a tutor.

If you do not understand any of the explanations provided by your peers or a tutor then it is possible that you are missing some important background material. Most courses contain advice on sources of background reading. However, you may want to contact a course tutor for further advice on how to proceed.

You feel isolated

Isolation is one of the most common problems distance learning students face. As we have stressed repeatedly throughout this *handbook*, the best way that you can avoid this problem is through positive engagement with fellow students and tutors on this programme. In the unlikely event that all your best efforts to do this have failed, then you should contact us for further advice (see Contacts pages).

Entering for examinations



New codes

Note that course/module codes are new from the 2011–2012 academic year and replace any previous year's examination numbers. This change does not affect the syllabus or content of the course/module.

The new code for each course/module is shown next to the course title in Annex A and Annex B of the Programme Specification and Regulations. For a table showing how old examination numbers are replaced by new course/module codes, see the University of London International Programmes website:

www.londoninternational.ac.uk/new_codes

The following pages are aimed to guide you through the examination process, from making an examination entry through to receiving your results. Remember, you do not have to take examinations each year, but if you decide to sit them they are usually held in May.

Examination Centres

Maintaining a good relationship between yourself and your Examination Centre is a very important part of the examination process and will ensure the process runs smoothly for you.

Firstly, you should contact one of the approved Examination Centres, listed online:

www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams

If you do not have access to the internet, please contact the Student Assessment Office (see Contacts pages).

We would advise you to do this in good time as your Examination Centre will need to countersign your examination entry form before you can send it to the University in London. The deadline for the University to receive examination entries is **1 February**. Your Examination Centre's local deadline will therefore be before this date, so always make sure you have submitted your examination entry form in time.

The Examination Centre will charge you a fee to cover the costs of accommodation, invigilation and the return of your script(s) to the University by courier. This local fee should be paid direct to the Examination Centre where you sit your examinations and is in addition to the examination entry fee you pay to the University in London.

Examination Centres are all independent institutions responsible for conducting the examinations at a local level. Each Centre will individually set its own local deadline for receiving your examination entry form and will decide what local fee it will charge you to cover the costs of accommodation, invigilation and the return of your script(s) to the University by courier. It is important to note that the University has no influence over the exchange rate or the amount of the fee charged by the Examination Centre. This amount can vary significantly from country to country so please check with your Centre directly. At the examination session, all students will be examined by the same written paper examination, on the same date and at the same time. In certain circumstances however, this may not be possible, so you should always check with the Examination Centre that you have the correct time and location of your examinations.

It is important that your Examination Centre can easily contact you, so always make sure they (as well as the Student Assessment Office in London) have your main current contact address, especially if you change addresses. Always check the details (for example, examination location, time and date) with the Centre directly and if you are unable to attend an examination, please let them know.

Students who have difficulty in making arrangements to take examinations at any of the listed Examination Centres, or who wish to take examinations in a country not listed, should write to the Student Assessment Office (see Contacts pages). You should note however, that where an

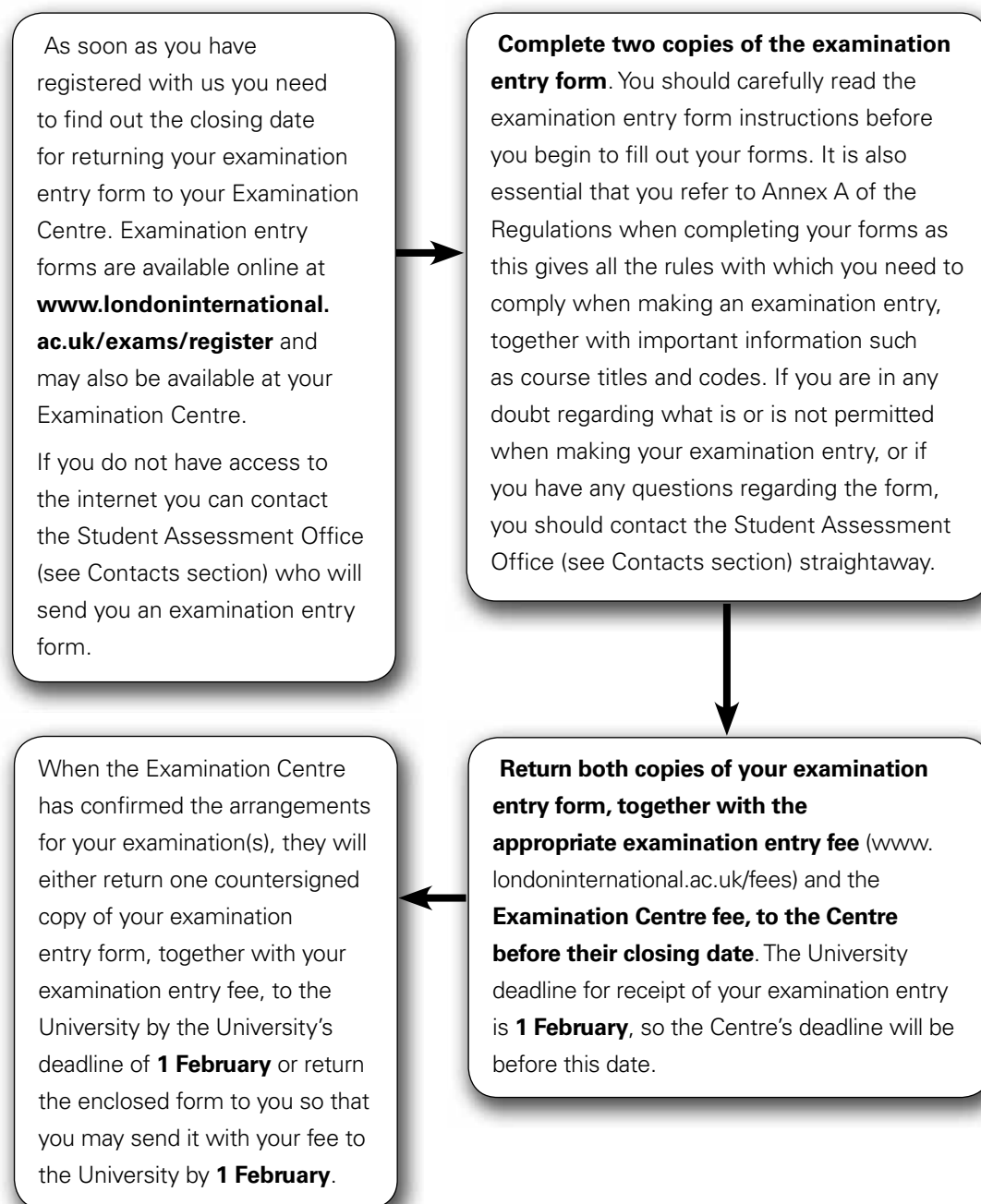
established Examination Centre exists, you will be expected to use the facilities provided by that Centre. The University is not able to establish an alternative Examination Centre in an area where one is already established.

HM Forces overseas and HM Ships

If you are serving and want to take examinations where you are based, you should contact the Student Assessment Office in London.

Making an examination entry

The following diagram will guide you through the process for making an examination entry:



Please remember:

The University deadline for receipt of your completed and countersigned examination entry forms is

1 February. You must ensure that your entry is submitted in time to be received by this date. In exceptional circumstances, entries received after **1 February** will be accepted only at the discretion of the University.

London entry:

The Student Assessment Office makes the arrangements for London examinations.

You should return one copy of the examination entry form with the appropriate entry fee if applicable to the Student Assessment Office by the deadline.

Changing your address

If, after submission of your examination entry form, you change your address, please let us know as soon as possible either by email, via the online address updating facility, or by using the Change of details form at the back of this *handbook*. If you are based overseas, you should also inform your Examination Centre.

Special examination arrangements

You should write to the Special Examination Services department (see Contacts pages) at the same time as you submit your examination entry, to confirm any special examination arrangements that you require and to submit any required medical documentation. This will allow us to make the arrangements in good time for your examinations. For full information relating to our Inclusive Practice policy, please see the General section of this *handbook*.

The examination timetable

The examination session is held in May–June each year and you should keep this in mind when making plans such as booking holidays. We can only prepare the detailed examination timetable once all examination entry forms have been processed at the University; however, advance timetables for most programmes are available in early January. It must be noted though that dates in the advance timetable are subject to change if, for example, we discover an examination clash. For the majority of papers the timetabling of examinations can only be confirmed in the first or second week of April.

Examination Admissions Notice

We will send you an Examination Admissions Notice two weeks before the examination session begins. This Notice provides important information relating to your examinations, including the examinations for which you are entered and the specified dates and times on which you will sit these examinations. If you do not wish to miss the opportunity to sit, it is vital that you make sure that you are able to take the examinations on the dates given on your Admissions Notice. No adjustment can be made to the dates on this Notice for any reason.

The Admissions Notice also includes an information sheet explaining examination conduct and the rules applying to your examinations. It is an important document and you should read it carefully when it arrives.

The Admissions Notice must be taken into every examination to provide the invigilators with proof of your identity.

If you are sitting your examinations in the United Kingdom, your Admissions Notice will be sent to you at the contact address we have on our records approximately four weeks before the examination session commences. If you are entered to sit examinations outside the United Kingdom, your Admissions Notice will be sent to your Examination Centre approximately four weeks before the examination period commences. You can then either collect the Notice from the Centre or they will forward it to you at your contact address.

If you have not received your Admissions Notice two weeks before the start of your examinations you must immediately contact the Student Assessment Office (see Contacts pages) if you are sitting in the UK or Republic of Ireland, or your Examination Centre if you are sitting overseas.

Sitting your examination

If, once you have made an examination entry, you change your mind and decide you are not ready to sit your examination, you will not be penalised academically for doing so.

If you are absent from **all** of the examination papers, for whatever reason, you do not need to inform us. However, if you are absent from one or two examination papers only, **you must write to us immediately**, giving the reasons which prevented you from sitting your examinations. If these reasons are of a medical nature, you will also need to enclose a medical report with your letter. Please also inform your Examination Centre.

Mitigating circumstances

If you think your examination performance was adversely affected by illness or other adequate cause, either during or directly before the examination session, then you must contact the Student Assessment Office (external.exams@london.ac.uk) straightaway and include a full medical report and/or other supporting documentation. This information must be submitted no more than three weeks after the date of your last examination so that it can be taken into account by the Examiners.

If you have difficulty obtaining your supporting evidence you should still write to the Student Assessment Office within the time specified above, but explain fully the reason why you cannot provide the supporting documentation at that time.

You should also say when you expect to forward this information to the University. The University can only consider your case if you provide us with appropriate supporting evidence.

Receiving your examination results

Results are available initially online and you will be sent an email informing you when they are available. In addition, paper copies will be despatched to your main contact address later. It is important that you ensure your contact address is up to date (see Changing your address). You should also make sure you inform your Examination Centre of any change of address and contact details.

If you have not received a paper copy of your results by the beginning of September for the May exams, you should contact the Student Assessment Office (see Contacts pages).

Please can we ask you to be patient and not contact us before that time. We will do all we can to get your examination results to you as quickly as possible

Administrative recheck of examination results

If, when you receive your notification of result, you are concerned that an administrative error may have been made in the calculation of your result, you should contact Administrative recheck of results (see Contacts pages).

Before making a request against your result it is important for you to be aware that you can only make a representation on administrative grounds. Rechecks cannot be considered on academic grounds, as each script is marked independently by two Examiners and the confirmed result is then determined at an Examination Board meeting. The decision of that Board is final. Therefore, if you make a request for an administrative recheck, your script will not be re-examined or re-marked by the Examiners. A thorough administrative investigation will, however, be undertaken.

How to submit an administrative recheck request

There is a fee payable for each recheck to cover the administrative cost of the process. This fee is currently £50 for each paper or section that you wish to have checked; for example, if you have taken four papers and you think the results for three of these papers may be incorrect, a fee of £150 is payable. This fee will be refunded in the highly unlikely event that an error is found.

To request an administrative recheck, please go to the International Programmes website and use the online payment service to make and pay for your recheck.

For further information, please go to:

www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams/admin_recheck

Further questions?

If, after reading this *handbook* and the Programme Specification and Regulations, you have any queries in connection with your examinations, please contact the Student Assessment Office (see Contacts pages) who will be happy to help.

Requesting your study materials and maintaining your registration

Changes to the continuing registration process

During 2011 we are changing the way in which the continuing registration process works and we are planning to offer online registration for the first time.

How to request your study materials and maintain your registration

When you first registered as an International Programmes student we sent you a package of introductory study materials, including this *handbook*. In each subsequent year of your studies, normally in August/September, we will open the registration period and send you an alert by email to complete continuing registration process online.

We will only open the continuing registration period once the examination results are available for your programme. This is so that we know which subjects each student will need to study in the following year and can make these available for selection during the online registration process.

Advantages of online registration

Using the new online registration process you will be able to:

- select courses and request your study materials online
- pay online
- complete your registration in one process
- receive confirmation of your registration instantly
- not have to wait for a paper form to be delivered through the post and processed, which should reduce the

timeframe from completing your registration to receiving your materials.

If you are unable to complete the registration process online, we can send you a paper registration form and study materials questionnaire to complete and return on request. However, we would encourage you to complete the online process if possible, as this will be the quickest and most efficient way to register. If you do need to register using the paper process please contact the Registration and Learning Resources Office (see Contacts pages) before 1 September to request that the registration form and study materials questionnaire are sent to you.

It is very important that you register while the registration period is open. If you do not complete the registration process and pay your fee before the end of the registration period, you will be deemed to be 'inactive' and you will not be sent any new materials, or be permitted to enter for examinations. If you do not register in a particular year, your registration status will be updated to 'withdrawn' and you will not be able to access any International Programmes services.

Please make sure, when completing the online registration process that you indicate all the courses that you intend to study, even if you are continuing to study the same courses as in the previous year. This is important as you will only be offered the opportunity to enter examinations for those courses that you have selected as part of the registration process. In addition, subject guides are often updated and there may be a new edition that we can send to you.

For new subjects, or where there has been a major revision to a subject guide, we aim to have the new guide available by **1 September** in the academic year leading up to the first examination. Any guides that are not ready when we send you your study materials will be listed as 'to follow' on your letter and will be sent to you as soon as they are ready.

Delays in receiving your materials

Although study materials are despatched by courier, please always try to allow at least one month between completing your registration and contacting us to ask where your study materials are. This is to allow reasonable time for the processing of your fee and study course selection, the picking and packing of your consignment and finally the delivery of the consignment to you. It is also worth remembering that the processing time can be increased during very busy periods such as September and October, so you may need to make an extra allowance for this.

Queries with your study materials

When you receive your study materials it is important to check the consignment note carefully. If you find that we have sent the wrong materials, or that any of the materials are missing, please contact the Registration and Learning Resources Office (see Contacts pages) as soon as possible and we will arrange for the correct materials to be sent to you.

In brief:

- **We will send you an email alert when the online registration process for your programme opens.**
- **In order to receive your study materials, access services from the International Programmes and be eligible to enter for examinations, you must complete the registration process, including payment of fees, before the deadline.**
- **As part of the registration process you must indicate all the courses that you intend to study, even if you are continuing to study the same courses as in the previous year, as you will only be offered the opportunity to enter examinations for those courses that you have selected as part of the registration process.**
- **Please allow one month between completing the registration process and contacting us to ask where your study materials are.**
- **If you need to register using the paper-based process, please contact the Registration and Learning Resources team by 1 September to request the relevant registration forms.**

Accreditation of prior learning

On some programmes you may be able to apply for 'accreditation of prior learning' or 'exemption' if you have covered a similar syllabus in the same breadth and depth as part of a previous qualification. To be eligible to apply for accreditation of prior learning, you must satisfy us that you have already passed examinations that equate in level, content and standard to the foundation level course(s) that form part of your programme. If you are awarded an accreditation of prior learning you do not then have to take that particular foundation level subject or course as part of your programme.

Not all programmes offer provision for accreditation of prior learning; therefore you should check your the Regulations to see if you can apply for accreditation of prior learning from the particular foundation level courses of your programme. If your programme has provision for you to apply, you must make a formal application for **all** accreditation of prior learning. Most students do this at the time they apply for the programme but, as a registered student, you may still apply provided you have **not** already made an examination entry for that particular subject or course. If you fail an examination you may not, at a later stage, apply for accreditation of prior learning from that subject or course.

To apply for accreditation of prior learning you should send a letter of written application as soon as possible to Admissions (see Contacts pages), but for undergraduate programmes your application for accreditation of prior learning must be received no later than 30 June.

You should refer to the Programme Specification and Regulations to find out if you are eligible to apply for accreditation of prior learning and for details of the particular subjects or courses for which accreditation of prior learning can be considered.

In brief:

- **If you are awarded an accreditation of prior learning you do not then have to take that particular subject or courses as part of your programme.**
- **You will need to satisfy certain criteria to be eligible to apply for accreditation of prior learning. These criteria are given in your Regulations.**
- **Not all programmes offer provision for accreditation of prior learning.**
- **You must make a formal application for all accreditation of prior learning, both automatic and discretionary.**
- **There are deadlines by which applications for accreditation of prior learning must be made.**

Transfers



Transferring to another International Programmes undergraduate programme

If you would like to transfer to another undergraduate programme offered through the International Programmes you should firstly check the relevant prospectus (available from the Information Centre, see Contacts pages) or our website at www.londoninternational.ac.uk to see if you satisfy the entrance requirements for the programme to which you would like to transfer. If you meet the necessary entrance requirements you can apply to transfer.

Applications to transfer must be made in writing to the Registration and Learning Resources Office (see Contacts pages). When making an application you must

give your full name, student number, correspondence address, the programme for which you are currently registered and the programme to which you wish to transfer.

Applications to transfer are considered on an individual basis. If your application is approved, in certain circumstances, you may be awarded credit(s) on the new programme on the basis of your studies on the old programme. However, the award of credit(s) is also considered individually and remains at the discretion of the University.

If you make an application to transfer after you have made an examination entry on your current programme, your transfer application will not be considered until after the publication of the result of your examination.

Transferring to an International Programmes postgraduate programme

If you would like to apply for a Master's degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate through the International Programmes you will have to cancel your existing registration and submit a fresh application for registration for that degree, diploma or certificate.

Transferring to another United Kingdom university at undergraduate level

You may wish to apply for entry to another university in the UK or elsewhere. You need to check with the universities concerned whether this is possible as every university has its own conditions and procedures. We would advise you to start making enquiries at least a year before you wish to transfer. If you live overseas, the British Council is a good source of information about universities in the UK and how to apply to them, or you can contact the Admissions Office at the university concerned. If you need confirmation of your results as part of the transfer process, please refer to 'Certificates, transcripts and Diploma supplements' in the General section of this *handbook*.

How to apply to universities in the United Kingdom

Applications to United Kingdom universities must be made via the Universities' and Colleges' Admissions Service (UCAS). The UCAS contact details are:

UCAS, Rosehill, New Barn Lane,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire
GL52 3LZ, United Kingdom
Email: enq@ucas.ac.uk
Website: www.ucas.com
Tel: +44 (0)1242 222 444 (Switchboard)
+44 (0) 870 112 2211 (Calls from overseas)

For consideration of a place from October in a particular year, the UCAS opening date for the receipt of applications is 1 September in the previous year and the deadline is 15 January of the year of study.

The British Council will have further information and application forms for UCAS.

Hints for UCAS applications

1. If you are applying for second year entry, ensure that this is clearly indicated on the UCAS form.
2. Personal statements are a vital part of the UCAS application. Not all universities invite applicants for interviews, so this is your opportunity to express yourself. Read through the prospectus carefully and indicate how you satisfy the criteria/conditions that the University is looking for.
3. If you are studying with an institution, a senior academic should be responsible for writing your reference. The grades predicted for each subject should be clearly indicated on the UCAS form.