

Centre *for* English Local History

Higher Degrees in

SOCIETIES · LANDSCAPES · CULTURES · IDENTITIES · FAMILIES



MA in English Local History

MA by Individual Supervised Study (distance learning)

MPhil and PhD Research Degrees



University of
Leicester

POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

The Centre for English Local History is the only specifically postgraduate and research centre of its kind in Britain. Founded by W.G. Hoskins in 1948, it is internationally famous for its pioneering approaches and teaching of Local History. It has exceptionally high ratings in the government's research evaluation and teaching quality exercises. Unlike most other centres for local history, it is entirely serviced by its own staff. You therefore enjoy easy access to lecturers and among staff and students there is a shared enthusiasm for the subject.

MA in English Local History (full-time or part-time)

The course is the most comprehensive of its kind. It aims to provide a training in the 'Leicester' approach to local, regional and contextual family history. It stresses comparative landscape and community, with emphasis on cultural regions, historical ecology, regional identities, and long-term perspectives. It is interdisciplinary and adopts many methods. The course appeals to many people who have, or wish to gain, jobs in 'heritage' related subjects, local government, teachers, museum curators, academic researchers, archaeologists, those interested in the built rural or urban environment, potential PhD students and academics, and those who study local and family history for their own personal interests.

Course Modules

You take five modules and write a dissertation:

- 1. Early Regional Societies, c.410–1650**
Provides a local historical perspective on the changing organisation of provincial societies as these were variously reflected in, for example, early kingdoms, shires, villages or urban networks. The different provinces, estates and settlements will be considered from the perspective of both the inhabitants and their rulers. Accompanying classes will highlight key sources (in translation) for the study of particular rural or urban communities: e.g. Domesday Book, charters or manorial court rolls.
- 2. Modern Regional Societies since c.1650**
Discusses comparatively the structures and features of local societies and economies, teaching appropriate research skills, and considering the changes that occurred before, during, and after industrialization. Subjects covered include welfare provision, charities, family history, historical demography, migration, agricultural change, landscape painting, insiders and outsiders, industrialization, and oral history. Sources examined include listings of inhabitants, the census, records of welfare and the poor law, and churchyard memorials.
- 3. Modern Regional Cultures since c.1650 (including Early Modern Palaeography, c.1550–1700)**
Introduces key subjects, questions and approaches for the comparative analysis of regional cultural history in England and Wales between the mid seventeenth and mid

twentieth centuries. These will include attitudes to gender and family, regional literature, Victorian photography, religious geographies, anthropological approaches, gypsies and alternative cultures. Sessions on early modern palaeography will concentrate on the practical ability to read documents.

4. Landscape History

Introduces key themes in landscape history: cultural landscapes, their creation in context; their modification; landscapes and society. Main periods: Anglo-Saxon, medieval, early modern, through to the present day. Wide-ranging coverage includes settlement history, place-names, field systems, enclosure history, urban morphology and landscape aesthetics. Emphasis is placed on both interpretation in the field and on the analysis of maps both early and modern.

5. Field Course

This field course introduces the comparative study of regional human landscapes as artefacts of historical cultures (very broadly defined to include, e.g. religion, work, leisure, class) in a region outside the east Midlands. The course stresses the continuities between periods from sub-Roman times to today; the contrasts between sub-regions; and the evidence of the built environment whether domestic, ecclesiastical or industrial. Particular emphasis is laid on the personal development of observational skills.

The Dissertation

Provides training and experience in setting up (from literature search and source identification to planning) and completing a research project within a set time limit, potentially to publishable standard. If you wish you may work on an aspect of the history of your home area or a region of your choice.

A module is also available in **Family History**, which can be substituted for one of the modules (1-4) above. This covers many modern approaches to family history, such as genealogy, population history, the census, oral history, autobiography, historical occupations, personal mobility, surnames, Jewish and ethnic identities, 'colonial' families, American family history, new work on genetics and origins, childhood and fostering, and class differences in historical familial experiences. Many sources and methods relevant to such topics are discussed.

Timetabling

For full-time students the course runs for twelve months, beginning in October, with classes, Saturday schools and the field course concentrated in the period between October and April.

For part-time students the course runs over two years (with a small extension for completion of the dissertation and some assessed work), beginning each October. You

may attend either one morning per week or one evening per week between October and March; attendance at a small number of Saturday schools and on the field course (usually in April) is also necessary.

Teaching methods

Lectures, many illustrated, practical classes with sources, computer demonstrations; Saturday schools in the field; a week-long residential field course.

Assessment

Assessment is by projects, reviews, skill tests and dissertation. Through your projects and dissertation you may build up expertise on a region of your choice.

Qualifications and applications

Applicants are normally expected to have a degree in History or a related subject. If you do not have a first degree you may be able to qualify with a 'long essay'. Application forms may be obtained from the address given at the end of this brochure. Full-time students wishing to apply for grants from research councils should contact the Centre by 1st March. Grants are also available from other sources.

MA in English Local History (distance learning)

The MA is also available by **Individual Supervised Study** (distance learning). Students registering in this way attend the Field Course, an intensive week of lectures in the summer, and do an extended dissertation. The MA in this form is particularly suitable for students at a distance from Leicester, who cannot come to the Centre regularly, or those who wish to concentrate on a dissertation. For further details on the MA in this form please contact the Secretary of the Centre.

Research Degrees: PhD and MPhil

The Centre also welcomes applicants for the degrees of PhD and MPhil degrees, and we always have about 30 such students (from all over the country) researching in this way. Their recent research topics include medieval families and land, long-term landscape history, medieval towns, women's work during Industrialisation, familial folklore, rural housing, the Channel Islands, the poor law, rural out-migration in Wales, immigration to Britain, urban Sikh communities, midland urban history, and many other subjects.

The Centre is a recognised unit for recipients of Economic and Social Research Council grants, and the 'Friends of the Centre' (comprising a large number of ex-students and others) also award grants.

The University Library

The University Library houses an exceptional local and family history collection covering all counties of England and Wales, and includes volumes dating back to the sixteenth century. This holding, together with the Marc Fitch Fund Library, makes Leicester unique among provincial English universities for the comprehensiveness of its holdings in local, regional and family history.

Unique Facilities of the Centre

The Centre is in The Marc Fitch Historical Institute. Leicester railway station is nearby. The Marc Fitch Fund Library is an important collection covering all English regions, as well as historical sources, architecture, landscape, and family history. There are superb map, oral history, film, photographic and print collections. There are excellent computer facilities.

Marc Fitch Historical Institute



Teaching staff of the Centre:

Professor Christopher Dyer
Professor Harold Fox
Dr Andrew Hopper
Dr Richard Jones
Professor Keith Snell

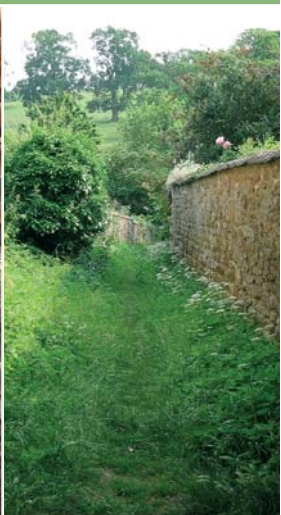
Research fellows:

Professor Charles Phythian-Adams
Dr Graham Jones
Dr Jane Laughton
Dr Mark Page
Dr David Parsons
Dr Sylvia Pinches
Dr Mike Thompson
Dr Kate Tiller

Please send enquiries to:

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