

Centre for the Study of the Renaissance  
Handbook for Postgraduate Taught Students  
2019-2020



Including Course information for the Centre's Taught MA:  
**'Culture of the European Renaissance'**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Centre for the Study of the Renaissance has had a long and distinguished history, partly because the University of Warwick has, over time, attracted many eminent scholars in the field, including John Hale, Martin Lowry, Michael Mallett, Nicholas Mann and Peter Mack. Well over forty academic staff, associate fellows and postdoctoral research fellows participate in the Centre's activities, which in addition to teaching include national and international research projects and a lively seminar series (STVDIO).

Several features have made the Centre a success in the past: its truly interdisciplinary character (staff and students join us from around Warwick's Faculty of Arts, in particular from English, History, History of Art, Theatre Studies, Classics, and Modern Languages), its international connections, and its character as an intellectual community. We hope to build on these in the future, by strengthening our connections with other universities and research centres and engaging even more strongly in collaborative research programmes. We trust that you, as postgraduates within the Centre, will take advantage of the opportunities offered to you.

We also hope that you, as postgraduates, will very much feel like full members, ready to take the initiative in organising conferences or branching out in new directions, or in general by contributing fresh ideas.

Caroline Petit / Aysu Dincer Hadjianastasis  
Director of Graduate Studies, 2019-20

**N.B.** This handbook is a supplement to, and should be read alongside, the information for Postgraduate Taught Students on the Graduate School website: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/gsp/taught/>

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** the organization of the Graduate School is in the process of being of being restructured, with the planned creation of a Doctoral School responsible for research degrees, and the creation of a separate Education Committee responsible for taught postgraduate degrees. Several links given in this handbook will therefore become obsolete during the course of the academic year 2019–2020. Please refer to the updated electronic version of this handbook as it becomes available, which will be sent to you by the centre administrator in due course.

## I. ORIENTATION

### 1.1 The Centre's Office

The Centre's Office is 2.30 on the second floor of the Ramphal Building.

### 1.2 Responsible Staff

For a list of staff associated with the Centre and their specialisms, see:

[http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/about\\_us/centrestaff/](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/about_us/centrestaff/)

The colleagues who have special responsibilities in the Graduate Programme are as follows:

Prof. David Lines (Director of the Centre)

Office: H4.10 in Humanities Building      Tel: 02476 523250 (internal: x23250)

Email: [D.A.Lines@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:D.A.Lines@warwick.ac.uk)

Dr Caroline Petit (Director of Graduate Studies, Terms 1 and 3)

Office: H2.35 in Humanities Building      Tel: 02476 523107 (internal: x23107)

Email: [c.c.l.petit@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:c.c.l.petit@warwick.ac.uk)

Dr Aysu Dincer Hadjianastasis (Director of Graduate Studies, Term 2)

Office: H0.09 in Humanities Building      Tel: 02476 150928 (internal: x50928)

Email: [A.Dincer@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:A.Dincer@warwick.ac.uk)

Mrs Jayne Sweet (Centre Administrator)

Office: 2.30 in Ramphal Building      Tel: 02476 524587 (internal: x24587)

Email: [renaissance@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:renaissance@warwick.ac.uk)

### 1.3 Areas of Responsibility

**The Director of the Centre** has ultimate oversight for the Centre's planning and management, including issues of financial control, and represents the Centre at meetings of other Heads of Department and at the Faculty of Arts. He or she also spearheads the Centre's research activities and nurtures relationships with other institutions.

**The Director of Graduate Studies** (hereafter referred to as 'DGS') is responsible for the smooth running of the taught MA, and the overall management of procedures relating to both taught and research students. He or she is Secretary for the Exams Board, communicates with the external examiner, and supplies students with feedback on their marks and performance on the course. In addition, the DGS is in charge of student recruitment and admissions, and is ERASMUS co-ordinator for the Centre.

**The Centre's Administrator** will be your first port of call in many instances. She receives essays, is able to direct students to the appropriate staff if they have queries, communicates with secretaries of other departments, and is in constant communication with the director of the Centre and the DGS, in addition to performing many other tasks related to grant management and the administration of the Centre.

## 1.4 Communications

The atmosphere in the Centre is friendly and informal, and it is easy to see individual members of staff. All staff post 'office hours' on the doors of their rooms when they will certainly be available, and you can always set up appointments at other mutually-convenient times by emailing them. If you are unable to reach a member of staff and the matter is urgent, you might contact the secretaries of the appropriate department or the Centre's administrator. You should check your Warwick e-mail account regularly. **Official communications to students will only be delivered to their University email address.**

It is essential that we have up-to-date information on your address, phone number and email so that we can contact you at any time. You will be sent a Student Record form, which should be completed with your personal details, and returned it to the Centre's administrator. Remember to keep your information up-to-date, both locally within the Centre itself and also within the University's Student Record System.

## 1.5 Facilities

The Centre's students have access to a small but significant **collection of books and DVDs**, particularly strong in the area of Renaissance drama and performance. Apply to Jayne Sweet if you wish to borrow items from this collection.

Students are welcome to use the **Postgraduate Hub** on the ground floor of Senate House (card access). This is a space that brings together postgraduates from across Warwick. Further details at [http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/pghub/postgraduate\\_hub/](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/pghub/postgraduate_hub/).

## 1.6 Health and Safety

The Centre maintains a register of staff and students with physical or medical problems which may require an emergency response from tutors or others. Listing is entirely voluntary. Individuals wishing their names to be included should make this known to Jayne Sweet. The registers will include information on what to do and whom to contact in cases of emergency. Students may read the University's statement on health and safety here:

[https://warwick.ac.uk/services/healthsafetywellbeing/guidance/handspolicy/hsw\\_policy\\_document\\_2018\\_v4.0\\_30\\_10\\_18.pdf](https://warwick.ac.uk/services/healthsafetywellbeing/guidance/handspolicy/hsw_policy_document_2018_v4.0_30_10_18.pdf)

## II. GENERAL ACADEMIC INFORMATION FOR POSTGRADUATES

### 2.1 Induction Events

Both the University and the Arts Faculty provide separate induction events which you are strongly encouraged to attend. General information on university events can be found at <https://warwick.ac.uk/students/welcome>.

New postgraduate students also attend various induction events held by the Centre including a lunch which will be hosted by the Director and the DGS and will usually take place just before the beginning of Term 1 (details to be provided separately). At this event, you will meet fellow new students and other students of the Centre, and you will be provided with practical information and details of forthcoming events at the Centre. There is usually another Centre social event at the beginning of term 2 (January), to welcome back staff and PGT students from their term in Venice.

### 2.2 Skills and Further Development

Postgraduates should take advantage of opportunities for deepening their knowledge or sharpening their skills in a variety of areas, in the Centre, in the Arts faculty and/or in the University at large. In addition to the Centre's skills sessions, which run alongside the taught MA's core module, the following possibilities should be kept in mind.

#### 2.2.1 The Graduate School Masters Skills Programme

Students may also take advantage of the University's **Masters Skills Programme**. This is designed to develop your academic, personal and professional skills whilst at Warwick. It includes a range of workshops, events and online resources to help you adjust to postgraduate study and enhance your research skills. It provides opportunities to meet other students and you can gain recognition for your efforts through the Warwick Skills Portfolio Award. For more information go to: [warwick.ac.uk/maskills](http://warwick.ac.uk/maskills).

For further opportunities of skills development also consult:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/gsp/taught/pgtprofessionaldevelopment>

#### 2.2.2 Languages

Language skills are particularly important at postgraduate level: they enable you to read primary sources in the original and make you better aware of the historiography and critical literature in countries outside the Anglophone world. Students are therefore strongly encouraged to develop or improve proficiency at least in Latin and one modern foreign language (French, Italian, German, or Spanish). Italian language classes are available during the Venice term and the Centre will cover each student's costs for this particular language course. (Note, however, that failure to attend a course fully will lead to the Centre withdrawing its subsidy.) Students intending to take the Italian or Latin palaeography classes (subject to availability) in the second term are required to have studied, or to be studying, Italian. For further information on the availability of language instruction at Warwick, see the web pages of the Language Centre: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/languagecentre/>. Warwick's Centre for Applied Linguistics runs courses to improve research students' command of written English: see <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al>.

The Renaissance Centre runs a weekly seminar on '**Latin for Research in the Humanities**', intended for Warwick students and staff who already have a basic knowledge of the language (typically: GCSE Latin, or who have completed the Classics Department's Beginners' course) and wish to brush up on, or maintain, these Latin language skills. It is also intended for researchers who, having had some training in classical Latin, wish to develop proficiency in medieval, early

modern, or modern Latin. For further details, please see the course outline on the Centre's website: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/postgradstudy/postbeginnerslatin/>

### 2.2.3 Auditing Other Modules (optional)

You may wish to discuss with your supervisor the possibility of auditing an MA module on offer in the Arts Faculty. This would not normally entail any written work. You will need to have the consent of the module's convenor.

### 2.2.4 Renaissance Seminars (STVDIO)

The Centre hosts a Research Seminar (STVDIO series), usually on Tuesday evenings at 5pm. Papers are given by visiting speakers as well as by Warwick staff and students. **All postgraduate students are expected to attend and participate.** For a list of events, see: [http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/news\\_and\\_events/seminars/stvdio](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/news_and_events/seminars/stvdio)

Students are also encouraged to attend seminars organized across the Faculty of Arts, such as the [Medieval Seminar](#), the History Department's Early Modern Seminar and the Eighteenth-Century Studies group, the History of Medicine group, and the research seminars offered by the departments of Classics, English and Comparative Literary Studies, French Studies, History of Art, and Italian. A combined Arts Faculty events diary can be found at <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/news/>

### 2.2.5 Reading Groups

Members of the CSR are active in promoting reading groups, typically on primary texts of relevance to the Middle Ages or the Renaissance. MA students are very welcome to participate in these (information at <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/readinggroups>) or indeed to start their own.

## 2.3 CSR Committee

The CSR's Committee meets once a term to discuss developments within the Centre and to hear suggestions from staff and students. The Committee is chaired by the Director of the Centre and includes, *ex officio*, the DGS and the administrator. Staff members (including tutors of the MA core and optional modules, and supervisors of research students), research fellows, and students are all strongly encouraged to attend. The meeting includes both an open and a reserved agenda; during the latter, issues of student progress are considered. This part of the meeting is therefore not open to students.

## 2.4 Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC)

The SSLC includes both PGR and PGT students; it meets once each term to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern. It acts as a forum in which questions about the course of study, about teaching and learning, and about the running of the Graduate Programme can be raised, problems or complaints aired, and suggestions and remedies considered. The DGS is present at the meeting in order to respond to questions. The SSLC is normally governed by a Chair and a Secretary, who are elected annually.

## 2.5 Warwick University Library

All students should register as users of the Library as soon as possible. Sophisticated systems are available in the Library for conducting literature information searches, which are invaluable for students. For an overview of the resources in Renaissance Studies and contact details of the specialist Subject Librarian (Katherine Waters), see

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/library/subjects/arts/renaissance/> The link also includes information on how to suggest books for purchase and on the procedures for ordering items needed for your research.

Students should be aware of special library facilities, such as the **Learning Grid** (available twenty-four-hours a day in a development occupying a space of about 1350 square metres on two floors in University House, with capacity for approximately 300 students)

[http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/using/libspaces/learning\\_grid/](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/using/libspaces/learning_grid/) .

## 2.6 Exchange Opportunities

Currently an ERASMUS + programme, linking the Centre with the University of Venice (Ca' Foscari) and the University of Paris (Sorbonne), brings postgraduate students from these two universities to the CSR for the spring term in each academic year. It also permits students of the Centre to attend the Sorbonne or the University of Venice for 3 months as part of their degree, normally beginning towards the end of Term 2.

The [configuration of the UK's future relationship with the EU](#) will determine the longevity of this scheme.

## 2.7 Pastoral and Wellbeing Support Services

### 2.7.1 Personal Tutors

All taught MA students are assigned a personal tutor. Research students, however, do not normally have a personal tutor, as their supervisor (or first supervisor) acts in a pastoral as well as an academic capacity. They should, however, feel free to talk to the DGS or the Director of the Centre (or indeed, to any member of staff they feel they can trust) about personal and academic matters that they do not wish to raise with their supervisor. Pastoral care is also supported by the Dean of Students, [DeanofStudents@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:DeanofStudents@warwick.ac.uk) and the Senior Tutor for the Arts Faculty, Dr Rachel Dickinson, [Facultyeniortutorarts@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:Facultyeniortutorarts@warwick.ac.uk) . More information about personal tutors and the Dean of Students' Office can be found here: <https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/tutors/>

[Wellbeing Support Services](#) (including the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team, Disability Services, the University Counselling Service and Student Support) provide other general and specialist help and advice for all Warwick students and will refer to other appropriate support, as necessary.

### 2.7.2 Dignity at Warwick

The University is committed to ensuring a working and learning environment in which all University members (staff and students) are treated fairly and with dignity and respect and to challenge inappropriate behaviour. Managers, and others in a position of authority, have a particular responsibility for leading by example, identifying harassment or bullying if it occurs and taking prompt action to stop it. There is full information on Warwick's policy in this area at the website: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/equalops/findsupport/dignityatwarwick> .

## 2.8 Special Circumstances

### 2.8.1 Disabilities

Students suffering from conditions which are likely to affect their academic performance or the ability to meet deadlines should speak in confidence to the DGS as soon as possible.

The University's Disability Services offer advice, guidance and support to students with Specific Learning Differences/Dyslexia or other, hearing and visual impairments, physical disabilities, mobility difficulties, Asperger's, unseen/medical conditions, mental health difficulties and any

other impairment or condition that is likely to have an impact on their studies and life at University. The services provided are tailored to the individual and aim at enabling students to manage their support and studies independently.

Students should visit Disability Services to discuss individual support requirements; for advice on the Disabled Student Allowance (DSA); if they think they might be dyslexic or have any other Special Learning needs; if they require mentoring or specialist study skills support for example; for information about accessible campus accommodation, parking, resources and assistive technology; and for information about external agencies that also provide support.

For Disability Services, see <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/tutors/disability> They are located on the ground floor of University House and can be contacted by telephone on 024 761 50641 or email ([disability@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:disability@warwick.ac.uk)).

The CSR will have due regard to such conditions. It is important that up-to-date medical evidence be provided, and that it is as specific as possible as to how it is likely to affect a student's work.

## 2.8.2 Illness and Absences

If you are unable to attend a seminar because of illness, please email the tutor responsible for the seminar, in advance of the relevant session if possible, copying your message to the Centre's Administrator.

If, for any reason, you are not able to study for a period of more than two or three weeks, it is essential that you contact your personal tutor, and ask about the advisability of applying for a suspension of studies ('Temporary Withdrawal'). If he or she thinks this is advisable, both you and your personal tutor should notify the DGS about your needs and your reasons for seeking a suspension of study. You should also supply medical evidence where appropriate. Requests for temporary suspension of study must have the support of the DGS and be made via the electronic request form available at Student Records online. See the further information here: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/studentrecords/twd/>.

## 2.9 Cheating and Plagiarism

This note is intended to draw your attention to what the University defines as cheating in assessed work (including dissertations); the procedures that are adopted in suspected cases; and your rights under those procedures.

### 2.9.1 Definition (University Regulation 11)

The University defines cheating as 'an attempt to benefit oneself, or another, by deceit or fraud. This shall include deliberately reproducing the work of another person or persons without acknowledgement.' A significant amount of unacknowledged copying shall be deemed to constitute *prima facie* evidence of deliberation, and in such cases the burden of establishing otherwise shall rest with the candidate against whom the allegation has been made.

In the context of assessed work you must avoid plagiarism, that is copying out other people's writings word-for-word without quotation marks or acknowledgement, or paraphrasing their ideas or arguments by changing the wording but without acknowledging the source.

The safest way to avoid problems associated with plagiarism is to use inverted commas (quotation marks) to identify any word-for-word reproduction of other people's writings (whether in print or on the web) and to be very rigorous about citing the source from which you have quoted. **Always specify your sources, by including footnotes and a bibliography with your written work.** For details of the procedures under Regulation 11, see <http://warwick.ac.uk/regulation11>, which should be read together with [https://warwick.ac.uk/services/aro/dar/quality/categories/examinations/policies/i\\_suspectedcheating](https://warwick.ac.uk/services/aro/dar/quality/categories/examinations/policies/i_suspectedcheating).

When submitting assessed work you will be required to sign a declaration that your work is all your own work; a copy of the declaration form can be found here: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/currentstudents/macoversheet>.

**Please note that this is a compulsory requirement for every submission during your course**

You will also be required to declare on this form if you have used the services of a proof-reader. Proof-readers are expected to comply with the University's policy on proofreading, which can be found here:

[http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/aro/dar/quality/categories/examinations/policies/v\\_proofreading/](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/aro/dar/quality/categories/examinations/policies/v_proofreading/)

Please note that under this policy it is normally considered acceptable to have another person identify, for example, common spelling or typographical errors, but not to make any changes to the content of your work.

### **2.9.2 Appeals**

The University has agreed appeals procedures. Further details are available from the Graduate School:

[https://warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/gsp/pg\\_appeals](https://warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/gsp/pg_appeals)

### **2.10 Problems and Complaints**

What do you do if you have an anxiety or complaint about any aspect of the Graduate Programme? You could take up specific issues with the DGS or with one of your option tutors. You might first want to discuss the problem with your Student-Staff Liaison Committee representative, or ask him/her to raise it at an SSLC meeting. You could ask your SSLC representative (or someone else who has taken the module with you) to be with you when you discuss matters with a member of staff. You may feel that this approach is not possible or that it will be unproductive. You may prefer instead to approach the Director of the Centre for the Study of the Renaissance.

Should your issue or concern not be resolved through these channels, the University has a clear three-stage Student Complaints Resolution Pathway for all types of informal and formal concerns or complaints. Further information, advice and guidance is available on the following University webpage: [www.warwick.ac.uk/studentfeedbackandcomplaints/](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/studentfeedbackandcomplaints/)

You may wish to have a look at these pages before you decide how to proceed.

You should not feel anxious about airing problems and grievances in this way. We expect students to be open and frank in discussing their experience of the Graduate Programme, and believe that the only way to plan for improvement is by being alerted to current students' experiences.

### **2.11 Guidance on Extenuating/Mitigating Circumstances and Reasonable Adjustments**

The University makes provision for mitigating circumstances and chronic conditions that affect one's work and that should lead to reasonable adjustments. Please review carefully the information at

[https://warwick.ac.uk/services/aro/dar/quality/categories/examinations/policies/u\\_mitigatingcircumstances/](https://warwick.ac.uk/services/aro/dar/quality/categories/examinations/policies/u_mitigatingcircumstances/) Note especially the expectation that mitigating circumstances must be declared before the Board of Examiners' meeting, which for MA students is typically in late October/early November. More info at <https://tabula.warwick.ac.uk/profiles/view/me/>.

## 2.12 Key Monitoring Points

The University is required to confirm that students enrolled on its courses are, in fact, attending them, details listed below.

### Term 1

1. Attendance at induction event/lunch at Warwick, typically a week or two before the start of the Venice term.
2. Five monitoring points in Venice: arrival meeting (w1); Meeting with personal Tutor (w 1–3); attendance of seminars in w5; attendance of seminars in w8; submission of work for each of the two modules by the deadline. Class attendance records being uploaded to Tabula.

### Term 2

1. Attendance of welcome meeting and induction in week 1, with DGS and CSR Director
2. Attendance of weekly core module seminar, monitored by class register
3. Meeting with DGS to discuss topic for dissertation and supervisor. Weeks 2-3
4. Attending Skills session in week 5
5. Submitting draft Research Proposal to supervisor week 9

### Term 3

1. Submission of critical review Week 1
2. Meeting with dissertation supervisor weeks 2-4
3. Meeting with dissertation supervisor weeks 8-10
4. Submission of MA dissertation (beginning of September)

### III. TAUGHT MA: CULTURE OF THE EUROPEAN RENAISSANCE

This MA is a twelve-month intensive programme of full-time study (twenty-four months part-time). The degree programme ranges widely over the cultural history of Renaissance Europe, offering an introduction to socio-economic realities and to court, civic, and learned culture in Italy, France, and England within the broader European context. Attention is also paid to the political, religious, and social transformations from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century.

We understand that students may need to undertake a small amount of part-time work alongside their MA study, but we strongly advise them not to undertake full-time work at any point during this twelve month period.

Note that, in addition to the taught MA, the CSR also offers an **MA by Research**, whose only requirement is the submission of a satisfactory (and rather longer) dissertation. All of the information below concerns the taught MA only.

#### 3.1 Course Structure

The course consists of 180 credits or CATS. These are essentially gained as follows:

- 4 modules x 30 credits = 120 credits
- dissertation = 60 credits

All MA students follow the core module **Renaissance Culture and Society** (worth 30 credits). This is taught in Term 2 and is composed of weekly two-hour seminars. It is complemented by compulsory skills sessions, including segments on bibliography, the development of research skills, and effective reading and writing (see <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/currentstudentspg/pgt/skillssessions>). Students are also encouraged to take classes in Palaeography: there are typically two streams per year, one in English and one in either Latin or Italian. These are also open to outside students. For further details, see: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/currentstudents/manuscripttoprint>.

All MA students also take **three** 30-credit modules. Two of these are studied in Venice in Term 1; the third is studied at Warwick alongside the core module in Term 2. This optional module can be selected from those offered by the departments of Classics, English, History, History of Art and the School of Modern Languages (see <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/postgradstudy/maeuropeanrenaissance/furtherinfo/moduleoptions19-20>), or it can be set up as an **Advanced Study Option (ASO)** within the Centre. In the latter case, one or two students typically agree on a topic with a tutor, who designs the syllabus with them and meets with them for an hour or a bit longer each week. Examples of recent ASOs include *Critical Foundations of Renaissance Studies* and *Italian Renaissance Humanism* (both with Prof. David Lines). The availability of modules varies from year to year depending on staff study leave. If you are interested in a particular module or area of study, it is advisable to contact the DGS as soon as possible. Each module runs over one term. After enrolment, students must use the on-line module registration system to register their option choices.

Students who pass the taught elements of the course proceed to the dissertation. A Postgraduate Diploma is an option for those who do not wish to write the dissertation or who do not wish to be assessed at the MA level (see below).

Students following the taught MA on a **part-time basis** cover the courses over two years. The order in which courses are followed is agreed following discussions with the DGS.

### 3.2 Core Module: Renaissance Culture and Society

All of the Centre's taught MA students must take this module in Term 2. This module aims to provide an interdisciplinary framework for studying the Renaissance across Europe. It introduces students to key debates and methodological issues. The module also assists in acquiring the skills necessary to undertake research and extended writing on the Renaissance. It supports the range of option modules available to students.

Two pieces of work are produced in this module. First, a **5000-word assessed essay** which is based on the material and ideas covered in the seminars. Second, a **3000-word critical review and bibliography**, intended as a preparatory step for tackling the dissertation, and which shows evidence of skills learnt in the skills sessions. This review is a required component of the course, but it is **not assessed**. We encourage you to link both of these pieces of work to your dissertation.

#### 3.2.1 Core Module Essay

This essay (5000 words, **exclusive** of footnotes and bibliography) may be based on any of the material covered during the core module over the course of the year, or on a topic outside of them that is of special interest to you. **Please make sure you discuss ideas for potential topics with the relevant tutor, both during the weekly sessions of the Core Module, or in separate individual meetings** — this will allow you to identify a viable topic at an early stage, and to ensure that your focus is neither too wide nor too narrow. We strongly advise that you determine the topic for the Core module essay and discuss it with a specific tutor by Term 2, week 10 at the latest. It is also useful to have thought about your dissertation topic at this stage, in order to avoid substantial overlap with your essay.

We encourage students to structure the essay by using a series of sub-sections with respective heading titles. This will help you to ensure that your essay is clearly structured and organised. Please also make sure you continue to discuss the overall theme, specific focus, argument, and development of your essay with a relevant contact person (tutor and/or DGS) as your work progresses.

You will need to include a bibliography and references, following the conventions described in the Modern Humanities Research Association (MHRA) Style Guide available here: <http://www.mhra.org.uk/Publications/Books/StyleGuide/download.shtml> a hard copy of this book will be in your welcome pack in year 1 of your studies.

#### 3.2.2 The Critical Review

The 3000-word critical review is a requirement of the core module, but it is **not assessed**. The Review is intended to serve as a foundation for your work on the dissertation, and will therefore review relevant scholarship on your chosen topic. The main stipulation of the review is that it should show evidence of skills learnt in the skills sessions attached to the core module. This refers less to the palaeography and bibliography segments (though it may do this) than it does to the IT-based sessions where it is vital for skills assessment that you demonstrate competence.

**Electronic copies of the Critical Review, to be submitted in week 4 of Term 3, should be sent to the Centre Administrator, the DGS, and your dissertation Supervisor, who will use it as a basis for the Dissertation meetings in Term 3.**

The critical review should show that you are conversant with, and can use effectively, many of the databases listed on the Warwick page specifically dedicated to Renaissance resources at <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/subjects/arts/renaissance/>

This exercise is not just a formal one for the purposes of assessment. It also has a specific point, which is to help you to construct effectively a comprehensive reading list using these resources for your dissertation. You should also learn to evaluate critically the various works discussed in your essay.

The structure of the critical review can be adapted to your own needs. You may wish to survey and evaluate several books (say, up to 4 or 5) in detail in the course of your review, because they are topically intimately related to each other and cannot easily be separated. On this model, you may find you want to spend roughly equal word limits on each. However, you might find that this is too many, and that you really want to concentrate on one book which is central to your topic, and mention others in passing as they are relevant. But in either case, you will have had to have done substantial background reading in order to understand critically the issues in which the book(s) engage(s). For hints on the contours of this assignment, see 'The Book Review or Article Critique', available for download at <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/types-of-writing/book-review/>.

Another way of understanding how you might do this task might be to go and look at the big review essays in *Historical Journal* and take some hints from their style and method. This review article by Christopher Haigh shows one (good) way of performing the task on several books. See: *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 33, No. 2. (June 1990), pp. 449-59. The article is available via JSTOR or see this stable URL:

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0018246X%28199006%2933%3A2%3C449%3ATERAPB%3E2.0.CO%3B2-X>.

### Stages of the Review

These are the steps one might take in approaching the task. Once you have identified the topic of your dissertation:

- i. Do an electronic and manual literature search for all relevant material, including: Iiter, MLA, Project Muse, JSTOR, Dissertations and Theses, Index to Theses, Web of Knowledge, Historical Abstracts, Warwick Library Catalogue, COPAC, British Library catalogue, Harvard University catalogue, probably Google (you never know!), Literature Online, Dictionary of National Biography, etc.
- ii. Collect together the material you need to read. Get books out of the library; download articles from JSTOR and other electronic sources; photocopy articles from paper journals.
- iii. (You will want to skim-read articles first to see if they are really relevant – it is a great waste of paper and time to print and read everything, just because it mentions the topic obliquely.) Take notes in a notebook or computer file along with references in case you need to come back to these materials. As you become a more experienced researcher it is easier to know early on when to reject an article or book as not relevant.
- iv. Read the material, including the footnotes and bibliography. This is important because electronic-resources keyword searches do not always catch crucial articles and books before about 1970, whereas good scholars can be expected to put earlier references in their footnotes and bibliographies. It could be very embarrassing to discover that someone had published a long article on my very topic in *Modern Philology* in 1912, to which I do not respond in my essay. That identifies me as lazy, and only prepared to use the internet to do research (not the kind of reputation one wants to get). Also, it may affect whether you choose to tackle that particular topic, or feel that the previous work done is still current. **(Do not discount publications just because they are old.** Many works published in the nineteenth century, for example, contain important perspectives and valuable documents.)
- v. Choose a recent book or set of books. I may think that a recent book (Marsha S. Robinson's *Writing the Reformation: Actes and Monuments and the Jacobean History Play* [Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2002]) overemphasizes the importance of and misunderstands the influence of John Foxe's narrative *Acts and Monuments* on the play in which I am interested. As I write a critical review of this book, I therefore also bring in other articles and evidence from points 3 and 4 to show what is really happening with the influence of Foxe on Rowley. This may include articles on how Foxe influences literature in general, so I may need to do another literature search, as in point 2, for 'Foxe' and other combinations of keywords.

- vi. **Critically evaluate the arguments.** In other words, judge to what extent the publications you examine make their arguments cogently or not. Point out problems with the use of certain sources rather than others, for example, or methodological problems (e.g., issues or evidence that have not been considered).
- vii. Write the review. **The review should have footnotes and a bibliography as per the MHRA style guide.** Remember this is primarily a scholarly essay and we need to be able to mark it accordingly. Please remember to cite electronic resources correctly: one of the assessment requirements of this exercise is demonstrating evidence of the skills learnt in the skills sessions, so you should say if you get an article from JSTOR or texts from EEBO. Databases usually have guidance as to how to cite their online resources (see, for instance, the DNB's 'Cite' section at the top left of the biography in question).

### Assessment Requirements

The critical review will demonstrate that the author can:

- i. identify a fruitful research topic
- ii. use scholarly resources, including electronic databases, to find all essential material pertaining to a particular research topic
- iii. read, understand and critically evaluate books and articles pertaining to this research topic
- iv. set these evaluations in their wider scholarly context

### 3.2.3 Skills sessions

Running alongside the seminars on Renaissance Culture and Society are weekly skills classes that emphasize the development of research, writing, bibliographical, and palaeographical skills, with the option of specializing in English, Latin, or Italian palaeography (subject to availability). These sessions, **mandatory for Centre students**, are also open to interested students from departments such as English, History, Classics, French, Italian, and Art History. Although they are not assessed, informal tests and assignments are part of the skills training. A Certificate of Attendance will be awarded to students who attend 80%+ of the palaeography class, and who pass the short test set at the end of the spring term. References pertaining to your MA degree work may refer to your performance on any of these assignments as evidenced by your file.

### 3.3 Outside Modules

Students on the Renaissance Centre's MA take at least 90 CATS in modules offered by participating departments. In Term 1, two of these modules are taught in Venice. For a list, see: <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/postgradstudy/maeuropeanrenaissance/furtherinfo/moduleoptions19-20>.

Although the length of the essays to be submitted is specified by the Centre (5000 words), all other matters involving teaching and assessment (including submission deadlines, topics of the essays, referencing system to be used, procedures for marking, etc.) are determined by the department offering the module. Be sure to check procedures, deadlines, and expectations in the relevant department(s).

Depending on staff availability and student interest, the Centre may be in a position to offer an Advanced Study Option (ASO) during term 2. This will be a focused module on a specific topic whose content will be devised by tutors of the centre in consultation with students themselves. Please signal your interest in devising such a module to the DGS, Director, and other centre staff early in the year in order to facilitate the process.

### 3.4 The Dissertation

All taught MA students write a dissertation of 15,000 words (exclusive of footnotes and bibliography). The dissertation is the most important piece of work you will produce in the year. Since it is fairly substantial (around 60 double-spaced pages) and requires significant research, it is best to start considering possible topics from the very beginning. You will be expected to have found a supervisor for your dissertation by the end of February. In order to help you to do this the Centre has devised the following detailed code of practice and schedule. Please study this carefully and plan your work accordingly.

#### 3.4.1 What is a Dissertation?

The dissertation is roughly the length of two academic articles or book-chapters, and you will need to identify a topic which can be dealt with inside that length whilst showing originality. It is not a book, nor an essay. You should view it mainly as an opportunity to develop research techniques and methodologies and to present the research in an appropriate format.

#### 3.4.2 Originality

A dissertation is normally expected to show a certain degree of originality. This is a concept that even seasoned researchers find easier to recognize than to define. It may be helpful to think of originality as residing either in source-base (when a dissertation is based on the analysis of a set of usually primary sources which have not been analysed from a particular angle before), or in treatment (when you are offering a novel view of problems and topics discussed by scholars), or in writing (the 'voice' will be your own, and total unoriginality [i.e., plagiarism] is obviously to be avoided). Your supervisor will be able to monitor the originality of your work at all levels, but it is something you will want to think about too.

#### 3.4.3 Presentation

Dissertations should follow, in addition to the points specified by the MHRA Style Guide (see link above under 3.2.1), the rules for presentation outlined by the Academic Office in its information on the presentation of theses, adapted to the shorter format of the MA Dissertation:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/gsp/gtehdr>

Dissertations for the taught MA must be handed in to the Centre's Office by the required submission date. **Two copies, in a soft binding**, must be provided.

#### 3.4.4 Scheduling Research and Writing

Most of your first two terms' work will be spent on your core module and your MA options. However, you should also start thinking about your dissertation from the end of the first term, although the Easter Vacation and the Summer Term are the period in which you will get most of the reading and research – and some of the writing – for your dissertation done. You should also leave good time for composing your final draft, which, even for experienced writers, is always more time-consuming than one expects.

#### 3.4.5 The Dissertation Timeline

During the first weeks of Term 2, you will have an interview with the DGS to discuss a possible topic for your dissertation. The Director will assign you to one or more supervisors, with whom you should make arrangements for an interview at once.

First Supervision (in week 4 or 5 of Term 2). Your first supervision will take the form of a session in which you talk over possible topics, and approaches to those topics. The supervisor(s) will point you in the direction of the most relevant bodies of literature and sources for you to investigate.

You will follow this up, and further research the topic yourself, with a view to producing a Critical Review of the scholarly literature, due in week 4 of Term 3.

The first supervision will be followed by other meetings as deemed appropriate by your supervisor(s), who will also be available by email to answer your queries. These meetings should lead to:

- i. Agreeing a topic (and if possible a working dissertation title) and a beginning selection of relevant primary and secondary works (note that coming up with the bibliography is your responsibility, although supervisors will be happy to provide guidance). Ideally this should happen in Term 2, weeks 3–6.
- ii. Presenting a draft **Research Proposal** (Term 2, week 9). This document, of approximately 2,500 words, should outline your research questions, methodology and sources, as well as a full bibliography of works and research materials to be consulted. Your supervisor(s) will return your draft Proposal to you, with comments and suggestions for revision, further reading and clarification. A **revised Proposal** should ideally be agreed upon and in place by the **beginning of Term 3**. Your proposal should include the following:
  - a. a short review of the secondary literature relevant to your topic
  - b. a discussion of the main historiographical and theoretical issues relevant to your research
  - c. an outline of the research project, including some discussion of the sources you will use and the questions you intend to ask of them
  - d. a provisional chapter plan
  - e. a detailed timetable for the research and writing
  - f. a bibliography, arranged as detailed in the Style Guide (see also MHRA style guide)
- iii. Writing of drafts, which you can discuss together with your supervisor by previous arrangement (give your supervisor at least two weeks to turn a draft around).
- iv. Presentation of the dissertation, by the stated deadline. Remember that **2 copies of the dissertation must be bound in a soft binding**, so ensure that you allow time for this final stage. This date of submission is not negotiable, and extensions are not normally given. If there are special circumstances which affect your ability to present your work at this time, this will need to be explained to the DGS.

These points of contact and monitoring procedures are designed to ensure that you are progressing well with your studies. They are there to ensure that both you and your supervisor have an accurate and realistic picture of your progress to completion. They provide an early warning if a problem arises.

**Students are required to upload a brief summary of each meeting they have with their dissertation supervisor, directly into Tabula, as soon as possible after the meeting.** Your supervisor will then ‘confirm’ the summary within the Tabula system. This requirement will enable you to review and document your own learning while it is still fresh in your mind, and it will ensure that both you, and the Centre administrator, have a full record of your supervisory contacts.

### 3.4.6 Supervisory Contacts and Availability

Students are entitled to regular and formal supervisory contact, which may include email, Skype and telephone as well as face-to-face meetings. We expect that full-time MA students working on their dissertation will remain on campus throughout term 3 in order to attend regular face-to-face meetings with their supervisor, and participate in the research culture of the Centre.

You should bear in mind that the summer vacation is the time when staff do the majority of their own research within the academic year. This may involve absence from Warwick. You will

therefore need to discuss with your supervisor(s) at an early stage the schedule which suits you both and how contact will take place.

You are encouraged to make good use of your supervisor's expertise and knowledge during the summer term to ensure that clear direction and guidance is provided at this point of the year, when academic staff are expected to be on campus. A good supervisor-supervisee relationship during this period should ensure that the supervisee has less reliance on supervisory input in later months.

### 3.5 Submission of Assessed Work

#### 3.5.1 Centre Deadlines

Please submit your Core Module essay and your Critical Review in electronic copy to Tabula. Electronic copies of your Critical Review should be submitted to the Centre Administrator, the DGS, and your Dissertation supervisor. You should submit **two copies** of your dissertation in hard copy in a soft binding in addition to an electronic copy to Tabula. Both hard copies and electronic copies of the dissertation must be submitted by the deadline. Please preface your submissions with a copy of the MA Essay/Dissertation cover sheet, see:

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/postgradstudy/currentstudents/macoversheet>

The following deadlines will apply for internal work required:

- 1 x 5000-word essay, based on the Core Module seminars, due by **noon on Tuesday 21 April 2020**
- 1 x 3000-word critical review and bibliography, due by **noon on Tuesday 12 May 2020**
- 1 x 15,000-word dissertation, due at **noon on Tuesday 1 September 2020**

These deadlines apply to full-time students. Deadlines for part-time students are decided by the DGS.

#### 3.5.2 Penalties for Late Submission of Assessed Work

All work submitted (whether or not for assessment) must be handed in by the Centre's deadlines. Once a submission date is published, it has the force of a University Regulation. Lateness of submission will only be excused on valid and documented medical or compassionate grounds. Medical grounds must be supported by a doctor's certificate or note. All written evidence concerning grounds for lateness of submission must be submitted to the Centre's Office at the same time as, or soon after, the event or events to which they refer. **The Centre's staff reserve the right not to mark non-assessed work submitted after the deadline.**

If you believe you are going to miss a deadline, you must explain the problem as soon as possible to the core module director or option module tutor. Application for an extension of deadline must be supported by one of them, and submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies (with any supporting evidence) on the form available from the Centre's Office. Under University Regulations, only the Chair of Department/Director of the Centre and the Director of Graduate Studies may grant an extension of submission date.

Where no formal extension is granted, 5 marks per working day (or part of a working day) will be deducted for late submissions. 'Marks' are intended on a percentage scale. A late piece of work that would have scored 65% had it been handed in on time would be awarded 60 if it were up to one day late, 55 if (up to) two days late, etc. *Penalties accrue only on working days (not on weekends or public holidays).* See <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/aro/dar/quality/categories/examinations/faqs/penalties>

### 3.5.3 Deadlines for Outside Modules

You will need to submit a 5000-word essay for each of your outside 'option' modules. **The deadlines, procedures for submission, and penalties for lateness are determined by the relevant departments.** Please speak to the tutor(s) of your relevant modules as soon as possible in order to avoid unpleasant surprises.

### 3.5.4 Word-Length and Presentation of Assessed Work

A published maximum word-length has the force of a University Regulation. All assessed work submitted for a Master's degree must conform to the word-lengths given in this handbook, and published elsewhere. You will be asked to provide a word count of your essays and dissertation (**exclusive of footnotes, bibliography and acknowledgements**), to be noted on the cover sheet you fill in when the work is submitted. Writing over-length places you at a considerable disadvantage, and marks may be deducted if you do so. It is of course, impossible to write to an exact word-length: we think that up to 10% is a reasonable margin for flexibility. If your work is judged to be over-length, the Examination Board for Taught Master's Degrees is allowed to impose penalties. Your work should also remain within the parameters in terms of minimum word-length: do ensure that quality has not been sacrificed to brevity.

Finally, all assessed work should conform to MHRA standards. Bad writing, inadequate proof-reading, and unsatisfactory footnoting (both in terms of content and the conventions of scholarly practice) will lower your marks.

### 3.5.5 What Happens after Submission?

For work produced in connection with the Core Module, the DGS will normally give your essay or dissertation to two appropriate readers at Warwick. In principle the essay will be first-marked by a tutor who is unfamiliar with your work, and second-marked by the person who has advised you in the preparation of the essay. These internal examiners will evaluate your work according to the criteria outlined below (section 3.6) and agree on a mark. **This mark is only provisional at this stage**, but you are allowed to see your readers' comments and the mark on which they have agreed. Your work will then be sent to the MA's external examiner, who will verify that the marking process has been conducted fairly and objectively.

### **3.6 Marking and Examination Conventions**

The pass mark is 50. Marks of 70 and above indicate work of distinction standard. The maximum mark for resubmitted work is 50.

#### **80+ (Distinction):**

Work which, over and above possessing all the qualities of the 70-79 mark range, indicates a fruitful new approach to the material studied, represents an advance in scholarship or is judged by the examiners to be of a standard publishable in a peer-reviewed publication.

#### **70-79 (Distinction):**

Methodologically sophisticated, intelligently argued, with some evidence of genuine originality in analysis or approach. Impressive command of the critical/historiographical/theoretical field, and an ability to situate the topic within it, and to modify or challenge received interpretations where appropriate. Excellent deployment of a substantial body of primary material/texts to advance the argument. Well structured, very well written, with proper referencing and extensive bibliography.

#### **60-69: (Merit)**

Well organised and effectively argued, analytical in approach, showing a sound grasp of the critical/historiographical/theoretical field. Demonstrates an ability to draw upon a fairly substantial body of primary material, and to relate this in an illuminating way to the issues under discussion. Generally well written, with a clear sequence of arguments, and satisfactory referencing and bibliography.

#### **50-59:**

A lower level of attainment than work marked in the range 60-69, but demonstrating some awareness of the general critical/historiographical/ theoretical field. Mainly analytical, rather than descriptive or narrative in approach. An overall grasp of the subject matter, with, perhaps, a few areas of confusion or gaps in factual or conceptual understanding of the material. Demonstrates an ability to draw upon a reasonable range of primary material, and relate it accurately to the issues under discussion. Clearly written, with adequate referencing and bibliography.

#### **40-49 (Fail):**

This work is inadequate for an MA or PG Diploma award. Significant elements of confusion in the framing and execution of the response to the question. Simple, coherent and solid answers, but mainly descriptive or narrative in approach. Relevant, but not extensive deployment of primary material in relation to the issues under discussion. Occasional tendency to derivativeness either by paraphrase or direct quotation of secondary sources. Some attempt to meet requirements for referencing and bibliography.

#### **39- (Fail):**

Work inadequate for an MA or PG Diploma award. Poorly argued, written and presented. Conceptual confusion throughout, and demonstrates no knowledge of the critical/historiographical/theoretical field. Failure to address the issues raised by the question, derivative, very insubstantial or very poor or limited deployment of primary material.

### 3.7 Weighting of MA Components

The final mark is calculated by adding the marks received for each of the 30-credit modules, plus the (double-weighted) mark received for the dissertation. The resulting number is divided by 6. All students need to obtain a pass mark in the dissertation to qualify for an overall pass mark.

### 3.8 Prizes

The CSR offers two awards to its MA students. Each of these is named after an outstanding scholar who was closely associated with Warwick: one for best overall performance (the **Martin Lowry Prize**) and one for the best dissertation (the **Sir John Hale Prize**).

### 3.9 Progress on Taught Master's Course

All your assessed essays will be returned to you with written comments and a provisional mark agreed by two internal examiners. Tutors and markers are available to provide you with verbal feedback on your performance and progress, and you should make individual arrangements with them to receive this.

In Term 3 (towards the end of May), when all your coursework has been double-marked within the Department, it is sent to the External Examiner for adjudication. An Examination Board (consisting at this stage of internal members only) is held about a month later, to review all marks and individual student progress. Provided that you have passed the minimum required credit for the taught elements of the MA, including the core module, you will be allowed to proceed to writing your dissertation. (This is a formal designation: 'Proceed to Dissertation'; you will actually already have started work on your dissertation.) If you have failed too many elements of the MA to make it possible for you to redeem these failures with a good dissertation (in line with the general university guidelines), you will be informed of this, and asked to withdraw from the course. In such cases, students may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma (see below).

### 3.10 The Postgraduate Diploma

The award of Postgraduate Diploma may be made where a student has obtained 90 credits, providing the student has obtained a mark of at least 40 in the failed module(s).

### 3.11 Course Questionnaires

At the end of the Term 1 and when the core module (*Culture of the European Renaissance*) finishes at the beginning of Term 3, you will be asked to complete a module feedback questionnaire for each element of your MA programme. Your response to the content and teaching of the various modules you have taken is invaluable, especially in planning for the future. Option tutors and the Renaissance Culture and Society module director report to students and to the Centre's Committee on the results of the questionnaire. The SSLC also considers these reports. You are also encouraged to complete the University's Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), which is an online survey that asks you about different aspects of your taught postgraduate programme. It is designed to help universities improve the quality of taught postgraduate degree provision in the future by collecting feedback from current students. You will be emailed a link to this survey, deadline circa June.

### 3.12 Considering a PhD?

Students thinking about continuing on to a PhD should start discussing their plans with the DGS before the end of Term 1 as several funding possibilities have deadlines in early January. Pay special

attention to the Warwick **Chancellor's Scholarships** (international students only) and to **M4C (AHRC) and Wolfson Scholarships**. Up-to-date funding information can be found at: [https://warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/gsp/scholarships\\_and\\_funding](https://warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/gsp/scholarships_and_funding) Students not requiring funding can also consider applying later on in the academic year. Of particular importance is that one has a strong and viable research proposal, something that can take some time to put together and which usually involves considerable consultation with academic staff. Further funding details are available on the website.

### **3.13 Careers and Skills**

You may have some ideas about your career path, but you could find that these start to evolve or change. Research at this stage can help you uncover some interesting possibilities and a potentially rewarding career. Knowing your skills, strengths and personality type will also help direct you towards possible careers and there are a range of self-assessment tools, personality questionnaires and reflective exercises that can develop self-awareness. Read more about what other support is available, from CV writing techniques to mock interviews, on the Warwick Careers and Skills web pages at <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/careers/>

A member of the Warwick Careers and Skills team normally visits Venice during Term 1 for an information session; further details of this event will be provided separately.



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