BA Art History

Course Handbook

2019/20
Welcome from the Head of School

Since its inception in 1961, the University of Sussex has consistently ranked among the best British universities for the study of arts and humanities.

In 2009 the University brought together four leading programmes - History, Art History, Philosophy and American Studies - into a new dedicated School of study. The subjects we teach focus on the ability to reason, to analyse, to take critical positions and to expound them. Your studies with us will be an intensive high-level training in how to think - whatever your area of study - fitting you with the skills for a wide range of careers.

The School of History, Art History and Philosophy (HAHP) combines high-quality teaching, cutting edge international research and a friendly and supportive atmosphere.

Professor Liz James
Head of School of History, Art History and Philosophy
Welcome from the Head of Department of Art History

Welcome to the Art History BA degree! This is your course handbook. It contains important information about how your course is organised, which you will need to know as you progress through your degree here. Please read it carefully. We look forward to meeting you, and wish you an enjoyable and fruitful time here at Sussex.

Flora Dennis, Head of Art History Department
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Key Contacts in your Department and School

The Art History Department sits within the wider unit of the School of History, Art History and Philosophy (HAHP). Administration of your degree and modules is organised by the School. The School, and its component Departments including Art History, are all situated in Arts A on campus (for a campus map, please see https://www.sussex.ac.uk/about/documents/uos-campus-map.pdf)

HAHP School Office
Arts A7

Art History Departmental Co-ordinator (your first point of contact for any administrative issues or difficulties that arise, such as changing modules, change of contact details, etc.)
Arts A7, arthistory@sussex.ac.uk

Head of Art History Flora Dennis, Arts A182, F.Dennis@sussex.ac.uk

Head of School Liz James, Arts A130, E.James@sussex.ac.uk

School Director of Student Experience Hester Barron, Arts A151, H.Barron@sussex.ac.uk

School Director of Teaching and Learning Kathleen Stock, Arts A114, K.M.Stock@sussex.ac.uk

School Administrator Deborah Jackson-Smith, Arts A115, D.K.Jackson-Smith@sussex.ac.uk

In addition, you can find out the contact details of your lecturers and seminar tutors by checking Sussex Direct (see p.9).

How we contact you

We will use your university email address to contact you (not a private one). Therefore please check it regularly for important course and module information.
Careers and employability

It’s never too early to start thinking about your future career after you leave Sussex. The Careers and Employability Centre is based in the Library. See the Careers and Employability Centre’s website for more details of workshops, CV advice, internship opportunities, employer drop ins, job fairs, individual appointments, and lots more: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/careers/services/students

The aims of the Art History course are to:

- Develop your enthusiasm for and knowledge and understanding of visual cultures in different periods and places.
- Ensure your sensitivity to the diversity of approaches to the discipline.
- Provide access to high-level research-led specialist teaching at appropriate points in the curriculum.
- Enable you to reflect upon and develop their capacity to learn independently.
- Provide preparation for employment and/or further study.
- Encourage an interest in and a commitment to interdisciplinarity.
Course learning outcomes

The Art History course learning outcomes are as follows (‘course learning outcomes’ are the skills, abilities and characteristics we expect you to acquire over the length of your Art History degree course). We expect you to:

- Have a broad and comparative knowledge and understanding of art history in more than one geographic region and chronological period.
- Have a more concentrated and systematic knowledge of one or more of the above.
- Have skills of visual literacy and the ability to relate unfamiliar artefacts and contexts to those that are more familiar.
- Have an understanding of the material nature of artefacts.
- Be able to set artefacts within their social and historical context.
- Be able to engage critically with historiographic material relevant to the discipline and be aware of new developments in the discipline.
- Be aware of the institutional structures that have influenced and continue to influence production, consumption and display of artefacts.
- Be aware of the visual dimensions of cultural diversity.
- Have acquired a range of core and personal attributes, cognitive, research, practical, and transferable skills (HAHP Core Transferable Skills).

Course structure

In YEAR ONE, you will be encouraged to challenge accepted thinking, engage critically with art’s histories, and think deeply about visual culture. Learning is through a combination of lectures, seminars and on-site work. You will be introduced to the histories of art – from the classical to the contemporary – and to the study of art on site, taking advantage of the numerous galleries and museums in Brighton and the South East. You will also explore how art history is communicated across a range of platforms, from exhibition catalogues to the internet.

You will take four ‘core’ modules: Art on Site: Place, Identity, Meaning; Stories of Art I: Shaping Art; Stories of Art II: Making Modernity; and Writing Art History: Media, Society, Culture. In addition you will have the opportunity to take two ‘elective’ modules from other subject areas, either to complement your art historical studies, or to provide an illuminating contrast with them.

In YEAR TWO, you choose to study the periods of art history that most interest you, from Byzantine Europe to 20th-century USA. You will be introduced to key terms and theories, from feminism to postmodernism, providing you with a vital set of tools to use during your studies. Through a combination of lectures, seminars, and a one-week trip to Rome, you will learn about the city where incredible examples of art from a range of periods (from classical to Renaissance to modern) sit side by side.
You will take three ‘core’ modules: Reading Art History: Critical Texts, Art and the City I and Art and the City II. The following is a representative sample of further options (though maybe subject to change in light of any faculty changes): Living Through Art: Art and Society in Renaissance Italy; Selling yourself: 18th Century Art and Society; Picasso to Kahlo: Transatlantic Dialogues; Pop Life: After Modern Art; Statues to Saints: The Art of Late Antiquity; Victorian Visions: Art, Industry, Modernity. You will again have the opportunity to take one or two elective modules from other subject areas.

**In your FINAL YEAR**, you will learn through seminars, site visits, one-to-one tutorials and workshops. You will look at art in context, focusing on the visual and material cultures of particular times and places, such as Modernism in early 20th-century Paris. You will also study themes of your choice in art history, such as art and empire or the representation of women.

Sussex’s thematic approach is distinctive. It’s designed to help you make connections between diverse ideas and materials, while allowing you great range when choosing your dissertation topic.

Options currently available include: Inhuman Bondage: the Image of Slavery 1750-1850; Sex and the City: The Origins of Modernism in Britain 1870-1910; The Order of Things: The Museum and its Objects; Album to Algorithm: Photography in Context; Art and Letters: Visual Culture in its Literary Contexts; Commemorative Art: Images, Monuments, Memory; The World Encompassed: Art and Empire.

You do not take electives in your final year.

### Choosing your options

You will choose your options for the next academic year following Semester 1 of the previous academic year. You will be sent an email by your departmental co-ordinator at the relevant time. In addition, your Head of Department or their nominee will hold an ‘Options Fair’ around that time: a publicised general meeting for your year group, to discuss the various modules available to you, and to help you make an informed choice. If you want further information, please drop in to see the tutor of the module you are interested in during their office hours (see below).

**‘Sussex Choice’ pathways and electives**

In addition to your main degree subject, those of you on Single Honours degrees may wish to take modules or sets of modules from other subject areas. You can take a ‘pathway’ or ‘electives’.

A ‘pathway’ is an approved, academically-coherent combination of modules, which students study across either the first two years (60 credits) of their degree or across all three years (90 credits). The rationale for Pathways is to enable students to study a second subject outside of their main discipline in a structured manner.

‘Electives’ are single modules which allow single honours students to study a subject outside of their main discipline within and beyond their home School. These modules may be at Level 3, 4 or 5 of the Academic Framework and will always have a credit
rating of 15 credit points per module. Electives are different from Option modules; the latter are selected by students on both single and joint honours awards from a group of modules linked to a specific degree course. Options are normally delivered within a single School.

For more information on pathways and electives within the Sussex Choice programme, see http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/curriculum/sussexchoice

**Student feedback and drop-in hours**

Every member of teaching faculty holds “student feedback and drop-in hours” (sometimes also known as “office hours”) each week during term time, which will be advertised on their office doors and on Sussex Direct. These hours are for, among other things: following up material discussed in lectures or seminars; raising questions you still have; trying out new ideas; discussing any feedback you have received on written work or presentations. They are a form of contact hours available to you throughout your degree, should you wish to make use of them. You are strongly encouraged to ‘drop-in’ during these hours or else make an appointment via email. (If a tutor is away without notice during a published office hour, please let the Art History Co-ordinator know- see p.5).

**Teaching and learning on the Art History Degree**

Modules on the Art History Degree are typically taught as follows:

Year 1: lectures (1 hour long) and/or smaller group seminars (2 hours long).

Year 2: seminars (2 hours long); Art and the City is taught through a combination of 1-hour lectures and a 1-week study trip to Rome in Semester 2.

Year 3: seminars (2 hours long) and workshop (1 hour); dissertations for the Semester 2 modules are supervised within the contact hours for the module, as one-to-one tutorials.

You will also be expected to give at least one individual or group presentation to the seminar group for each module.

In addition to attending lectures and seminars, you are expected to do independent reading and note-taking and any other tasks the lecturer has set you for the week. You are also encouraged to use your own time to go to galleries, exhibitions and other sites to view works of art first-hand wherever possible.

Much of your course material is found on Canvas https://canvas.sussex.ac.uk/, the University’s online learning platform, which you will need to check every week. You should be automatically subscribed to the Canvas sites for your modules but if not, please contact the Art History Co-ordinator in the School Office (see p.5).

Most of your core reading is found under ‘reading list’ on the Canvas module. Any additional reading material not on Canvas can be found via the University Library http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/ In addition to their physical copies of books, they
have an extensive electronic library which is accessible remotely. Please contact your tutor if some recommended book or other reading is not there so they can order it for you.

All of your class times and locations, and the contact details of your tutors, are to be found in your timetable on Sussex Direct https://direct.sussex.ac.uk/login.php. Sussex Direct is the University’s online tool for administrating your degree. Please contact the Art History Co-ordinator in the School Office (see p.5) if anything is missing or in error.

Helpful learning resources for your Art History degree

Art History Department Referencing Guide

Library Subject Area - Art History

ARTstor digital image library

The HAHP Image Lab (or Slide Library as we sometimes still call it), is located in Arts A183 and is open Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm. It contains PCs, scanners and printers for you to use when preparing assignments and presentations. It also has a selection of reference books and exhibition catalogues for you to consult.

Student mentors

Mentors are HAHP PhD students who are available to help you with a range of study skills, such as time management and effective planning, help with presentations, planning and structuring written assessments, revision skills and exam preparation, contributing effectively to seminars, and making the best use of feedback. Mentors run lunchtime drop-in sessions every day of the week; see posters around the school for details.

Brushing up your general academic skills

The Careers and Employability Centre runs a range of workshops on specific skills such as: academic writing, planning and structuring essays; referencing; managing stress; revision; and more. See here for a range of online and in-person resources: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/careers/studyskills

English Language skills

The Sussex Centre for Language Studies offers resources designed to help students improve their academic English and their understanding of British academic culture.

They offer free workshops, 'time to write' sessions and one-to-one tutorials throughout the academic year for students for whom English is not their first language. These are available to international/overseas students studying for a degree at the University of Sussex.
Assessment

Whilst at Sussex you will sit a range of mid-term and end-of-term assessments, and get marks for them. In First Year, these marks will contribute to an overall mark which determines whether you can progress to Second Year. In Second and Final Year, your marks will be combined to compose your eventual degree classification. Degree classifications are as follows: First (70-100), 2.1 or ‘Upper Second’ (60-69), 2.2 or ‘Lower Second’ (50-59), Third (40-49), Fail (39 or below). Your Second Year marks will be weighted at 40%, and your Final Year marks will be weighted at 60% of your overall degree mark.

Assessments may take the form of essays, gobbets, presentations, exams, dissertations, take away papers or in-class tests, for instance.

The Examination and Assessment Regulations govern the way in which all taught students – undergraduate and postgraduate – are examined and assessed at the University of Sussex. Follow this link to the full examination and assessment handbook. Alternatively see this link for FAQs http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/examsandassessment

‘Assessment criteria’ broadly describe the characteristics typically associated with various marks and classifications. For Art History Assessment Criteria, follow the links below:

Art History Assessment Criteria

Art History Assessment Criteria UEX

Progression and Degree

At the end of the academic year the Progression and Award Board (PAB) will confirm your marks for the year. The PAB also confirms your eligibility to progress to the next stage of your degree, or if you are at the final stage, whether you have met the requirements for an award and the classification of this.

Following the meeting of the PAB you will receive an individual mark for each of the modules you have completed and a single overall mark for the year known as the ‘stage mean’. Please see Examination and Assessment Regulations Handbook for more details.

Feedback on your work

Written feedback will normally be provided to all students on all assessments within three weeks of the assessment deadline. If it is necessary to return comments after this time, every effort will be made to notify students in advance, but please remember that sometimes there are unexpected delays for reasons beyond our control (e.g. staff illnesses).
We aim to make our feedback clear and helpful, giving you constructive information about how to improve which you can take forward to other assessments in the rest or your degree. If anything is unclear about a piece of feedback, or you don’t feel it has been as helpful as it might be, we strongly encourage you to discuss it further with your tutor during an office hour (see p.8). If you have a complaint about a piece of feedback, please contact the School Director of Teaching and Learning (see p.5), about it and they will try to resolve the matter.

In addition to written feedback, you will get informal feedback during seminars, as you discuss, explore and clarify new ideas with your tutor and fellow students.

Electronic submission

Students taking modules will usually be asked to submit assessments electronically where assessments are text-based, for example, an essay. Your Sussex Direct webpages and module handbook will give all assessment details, including whether the assessment is to be submitted via e-submission through Sussex Direct or in hard copy via the School Office. Feedback for all e-submission assessments will also be provided electronically.

Please refer to the frequently asked questions available on the following webpage for further information:

[www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/examsandassessment/esubmission](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/examsandassessment/esubmission)

Turnitin

You are encouraged to use the internet-based text-matching service, Turnitin, prior to submitting your assessments. This may help you identify problems with your referencing.

Turnitin is also used during the marking process as a means of checking the originality of submitted work. All assessments submitted electronically via e-submission will be uploaded to the Turnitin database and an Originality Report will be made available to the marker. Please refer to the frequently asked questions available on the following webpage for further information:

[www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/examsandassessment/esubmission](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/examsandassessment/esubmission)

Late Submission

Should you miss an assessment submission deadline (for whatever reason) you may still submit the assessment after the published deadline. However, this will incur a penalty, as follows:

- Work submitted up to 24 hours late shall incur a penalty deduction of 5 percentage points (not 5% of the actual mark)
- Work submitted after 24 hours and up to 7 days late shall incur a penalty deduction of 10 percentage points (not 10% of the actual mark)
No work shall be accepted after the 7 day penalty period has elapsed

Exceptional Circumstances - please see the Student Life website

If your assessments are affected by sudden and unforeseen circumstances (e.g. illness) you can make an Exceptional Circumstances (EC) claim. All EC claims are completed on Sussex Direct and evidence must be uploaded electronically.

The Student Life Centre can advise you on how to make a claim. Please see the Student Life Centre website: https://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre/index

The Student Life Centre

The Student Life Centre offers information and advice to all Sussex Students. Our aim is to help you to gain the best university experience you can, whatever your circumstances, by ensuring if you run into problems you get appropriate guidance and support.

The Student Life Centre is based in the heart of the campus: on the ground floor at the side of Bramber House. There are lots of ways to access our service. We are open from 9.00 am – 5.00 pm every week day, you can drop in to see us, call 01273 876767, email studentlifecentre@sussex.ac.uk or make an appointment – just go onto your Sussex Direct site, click on your ‘Study’ tab and then on Student Life Centre. You can select the advisor you wish to see at a time that suits you.

Amongst the many issues we can help you with are:

- Personal concerns affecting study progress or well-being.
- Funding and finance including scholarships, bursaries and hardship funds.
- Sources of help to improve academic performance – identifying obstacles to learning.
- Understanding university systems and regulations in relation to assessment, services, complaints, conduct, and discipline.
- Progression, intermission and withdrawal processes - discussion and support.
- Referrals to other professional services on campus.
- Exceptional circumstances claims help.
- If you don’t know who to talk to or who to ask – start at the Student Life Centre.

Because we are also a proactive service you may be contacted directly by the SLC while you are a student here as we may wish to offer you particular support. This may be, for example, in response to concern from your School about your attendance, participation or engagement with your course.

Good academic practice

The University takes academic misconduct very seriously, as does the Art History Department. Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, collusion, and personation
(getting someone else to write work for you). It is your responsibility to find out what constitutes plagiarism, collusion, and personation, and to avoid them. If in doubt, please ask your tutors. Here are some useful links:

Sussex Student Union information on academic misconduct

Sussex Skills Hub material on Plagiarism

Sussex Skills Hub Referencing and Plagiarism quiz

Art History Department Referencing Guide

University regulations on Academic Misconduct

English language resources and support

Your feedback to us

We like to hear from you how we are doing and how we might improve things. There are several ways you can get in touch:

- Informal feedback half way through the module, normally taken in class by your module tutor (if this doesn’t happen, please ask your tutor, or failing that, alert the Director of Teaching and Learning – see p.5).

- Electronic course evaluation questionnaires after the module is over (you will be sent an email with a link).

- A chat with your tutor, passing on any concerns you have.

- A chat with your Student Rep. For information about the Student Rep system, and to find your Rep, please see here https://www.sussexstudent.com/student-reps/for-students/

- If you have a major concern that you can’t resolve with your tutor, please contact either the Director of Student Experience or the Director of Teaching and Learning (see p.5).

Placements and Study Abroad

For opportunities to do an optional professional placement in your third year, please see http://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/careers/placement-internships for details.

For information about Study Abroad opportunities whilst at Sussex, please see http://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/study-abroad/destinations

What do to if you decide to change course

We recognise that sometimes students can feel after some reflection that a course is not for them, and wish to change to some other more suitable course. If this describes your situation, please see the Curriculum and Assessment Officer Gavin Osbourne (Arts A7, G.Osbourne@sussex.ac.uk) who will guide you through the process of applying to make a change. If you want advice on changing course,
please see the Director of Student Experience, Hester Barron (Arts A151, H.Barron@sussex.ac.uk).

The University Student Handbook
For other more general material, please also see the University student handbook
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/students/essentials/studenthandbook/