



MSc in Learning Technologies

COURSE ARRANGEMENTS For October 2011 Entry

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Overview of the MSc in Learning Technologies Programme

Programme Directors:	Niall Winters (n.winters@ioe.ac.uk) & Alex Poulouvassilis (ap@dcs.bbk.ac.uk)
Admissions Tutors:	Diana Laurillard (d.laurillard@ioe.ac.uk) & Oded Lachish (oded@dcs.bbk.ac.uk)
Projects Co-ordinator:	Richard Noss (r.noss@ioe.ac.uk)
Programme Administrator:	Thomas Epineau (thomas@dcs.bbk.ac.uk)

This programme provides academic grounding for the profession of Learning Technologist in all its forms. It is taught by staff from the London Knowledge Lab (www.lkl.ac.uk), a multi-disciplinary research centre of Birkbeck and the Institute of Education aiming to explore the ways in which digital technologies and new media are shaping the future of knowledge and learning. The programme is administered by Birkbeck, but students have full access to the facilities and services of both institutions.

The MSc in Learning Technologies aims to provide students with the technical and pedagogic knowledge to be able to critique, develop and improve on the use of technology from the perspective of state-of-the-art AI and computer science techniques, learning theory, teaching practice, and curriculum design. Students will learn how to design, develop, test and evaluate software for use in supporting teaching and learning, to different levels of expertise, depending on their background and interests.

What makes this MSc distinctive is its twin focus on the computer science *and* the learning theory that together underpin the optimal use of learning technologies. There is widespread use of learning technology now in Higher Education, Further Education and Lifelong Learning, but it may under-exploit the potential of the technology for two reasons: through a lack of understanding of the range of functional capabilities of digital technologies; and through using an insufficiently sophisticated model of learning with which to challenge technology. Equally, the research products and practical applications that do exploit current technical capability in their development of learning technologies often remain in research labs, not penetrating through to practice and large-scale implementation. The London Knowledge Lab is unique in the UK in bringing together world-class researchers in both education and computer science, to combine their expertise in a course specially designed for researchers, academics and professionals in this field.

The MSc in Learning Technologies is targeted towards:

- a. those who are already working in the learning technologies sector and who wish gain advanced knowledge and skills in implementation and evaluation methods;
- b. those with a Computing background (academic or practitioner) who wish to move into a career in developing learning systems;
- c. those with an Education background wishing to move into a career in evaluating or developing learning systems;
- d. those from either background who wish to undertake a one-year (or two years part-time) postgraduate degree, possibly with a view to then continuing on to an MPhil/PhD.

Students who complete this programme successfully will be able to:

- demonstrate an advanced level of understanding and ability to make decisions about a wide range of learning technologies
- design, implement and evaluate software systems in specific settings
- critique the use of technology from the perspective of learning theory, teaching practice, and curriculum design
- assess the pedagogic potential of new digital technologies, testing educational theory, feeding back into theoretical issues relating to teaching, learning and communication
- advise and guide the appropriate design and use of technology for learning, in terms of its potential pedagogic value
- critique, redesign and evaluate a conventional learning design that exploits digital technology to achieve planned improvements in quality and productivity of the learning experience
- demonstrate an advanced level of understanding of the use of AI techniques, user modelling, user-centred design and participatory design in the development of learning technologies
- critically compare their work with existing approaches, place their work in the wider context, and evaluate critically their contribution
- communicate complex ideas, concepts, approaches and techniques to others, possibly from different disciplines
- develop the capability to take an interdisciplinary perspective on the respective roles of Computer Science and Education, and the ways they can be combined, in the use of technologies for learning.

Full-time students take 120 credits of taught modules over one year and undertake a 3-4 month project. Part-time students take 120 credits of taught modules over the two years and undertake their project in the second year. The programme is delivered through lectures, demonstrations, tutorials, computer laboratory-based practical activities, classroom-based individual and group work, group discussion, collaboration and presentations, and tutored and student online discussions using the institutions' VLE. Each student undertakes an individual project of their own devising, supervised by academic staff from the London Knowledge Lab. The project provides an opportunity for students to investigate an aspect of the subject that particularly interests them, enabling them either to build a larger and more complex system than they encounter in the taught module coursework, or to perform a substantial piece of social science or education research into a currently emerging technology-oriented phenomenon in teaching and learning.

There are two routes through the programme, Route A and Route B:

- Route A is appropriate for those without significant prior experience of computing.
- Route B is appropriate for those with significant prior experience of computing, including prior experience with using an object-oriented programming language.

Students who are following Route A take the following modules:

- Pedagogy, Adaptivity and Technology (PAT) – 30 credits (core module)
- Research Methods in Learning Technologies (RMLT) – 30 credits (core module)
- Introduction to Software Development (ISD) – 30 credits (compulsory module)
- The Project – 60 credits (core module)
- 30 additional credits of optional modules selected from:
 - Technologies for Mobile and Ubiquitous Learning (TMUL) – 15 credits
 - Learning and Teaching with Technologies (LTT) – 30 credits
 - Semantic Web (SW) – 15 credits
 - Object-Oriented Design and Programming (OODP) – 15 credits
 - Component-Based Software Development (CBSD) – 15 credits

Students who are following Route B take the following modules:

- Pedagogy, Adaptivity and Technology (PAT) – 30 credits (core module)
- Research Methods in Learning Technologies (RMLT) – 30 credits (core module)
- The Project – 60 credits (core module)
- 60 additional credits of optional modules selected from:
 - Technologies for Mobile and Ubiquitous Learning (TMUL) – 15 credits
 - Learning and Teaching with Technologies (LTT) – 30 credits
 - Semantic Web (SW) – 15 credits
 - Intelligent Technologies (IntTech) – 15 credits
 - Object-Oriented Design and Programming (OODP) – 15 credits
 - Component-Based Software Development (CBSD) – 15 credits

Please note that the list of optional modules available may vary from year to year, and that choices may be subject to timetabling constraints.

In this booklet ‘College’ refers to Birkbeck, and ‘Department’ refers to the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems at Birkbeck, which is administering this programme and many of whose staff are members of the London Knowledge Lab.

The information in this booklet is specific to the MSc in Learning Technologies. More information about the programme is available from the web page www.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/courses/lt/. For more general information about Birkbeck and the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems, please consult the Department’s Student Handbook.

It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with the contents of both of these booklets as well as the programme web site, and to consult the programme and module web pages on a regular basis since additional information will be posted there during the year.

Dates

Introductory talks for new students

Part-timers: Thursday 29th September, 6-9pm, venue TBA

Full-timers: Thursday 29th September, 6-9pm, venue TBA

These introductory talks, which all new students must attend, will include a short hands-on introduction to the Department's computer systems. We will also walk over to the London Knowledge Lab building in Emerald Street and tour the facilities there.

Term dates

The taught course covers two terms of eleven weeks each. The summer term is given over to revision, exams and the beginning of projects. The term dates for the coming year are:

Autumn	Mon 3 Oct. 2011	-	Fri 16 Dec. 2011
Spring	Mon 9 Jan. 2012	-	Fri 23 Mar. 2012
Summer	Mon 23 Apr. 2012	-	Fri 6 Jul. 2012

Lectures begin on Monday 3rd October in the Autumn term, and on Monday 9th January in the Spring term. Students should attend lectures during term time as shown in the timetables below. If students are unable to attend lectures, they should arrange with lecturers or fellow students to obtain copies of any material distributed in class.

Students are expected to attend all lectures. Any student who decides to withdraw from the programme should inform the Programme Director, in writing or by email. Students who simply stop turning up for lectures without formally withdrawing from the programme are still held liable for fees.

Timetables

Please note, sessions marked MAL will be held in the Birkbeck Malet Street Building, and sessions marked ES will be held in the Emerald Street Building, 23-29 Emerald Street, London WC1N 3QS.

Full-time Timetable, 2011/2012

Full-time students must select 120 credits of taught modules.

Provisional Full-time lecture timetable 2011/12						
Day	Autumn			Spring		
	Module	Time	Room	Module	Time	Room
Monday	SW	6-9pm	MAL – TBA	PAT*	5-8pm	ES Large Seminar Room
Tuesday	PAT*	5-8pm	ES Small Seminar Room	OODP RMLT	1.30-5pm 5.30-8.30pm	MAL 404 ES Large Seminar Room
Wednesday	LTT	5-8pm	ES Large Seminar Room	TMUL CBSD	2-5pm 6-9pm	MAL 405 MAL 407
Thursday	IntTech ISD	2-5pm 6-9pm	MAL 407 MAL 404 and 405			
Friday	ISD	5-7.30pm	MAL 404 and 405			

*N.B. This module extends over two terms, and the teaching sessions run fortnightly not weekly. The first lecture will be on Tuesday 4th October.

KEY

- Pedagogy, Adaptivity and Technology (PAT) – 30 credits
- Research Methods in Learning Technologies (RMLT) – 30 credits
- Introduction to Software Development (ISD) – 30 credits
- Technologies for Mobile and Ubiquitous Learning (TMUL) – 15 credits
- Learning and Teaching with Technologies (LTT) – 30 credits
- Semantic Web (SW) – 15 credits
- Intelligent Technologies (IntTech) – 15 credits
- Object-Oriented Design and Programming (OODP) – 15 credits
- Component-Based Software Development (CBSD) – 15 credits

Part-time Year 1 Timetable, 2011/2012

Year 1 part-time students must select 75 to 105 credits of taught modules.

Provisional Part-time Year 2 timetable 2011/2012						
Day	Autumn			Spring		
	Module	Time	Room	Module	Time	Room
Monday	SW	6-9pm	MAL – TBA	PAT*	5-8pm	ES Large Seminar Room
Tuesday	PAT*	5-8pm	ES Small Seminar Room	RMLT	5.30-8.30pm	ES Large Seminar Room
Wednesday	LTT	5-8pm	ES Large Seminar Room	CBSD	6-9pm	MAL 407
Thursday	ISD	6-9pm	MAL 404 and 405	OODP	6-9pm	MAL 403
Friday	ISD	5-7.30pm	MAL 404 and 405			

*N.B. This module extends over two terms, and the teaching sessions run fortnightly not weekly. The first lecture will be on Tuesday 4th October.

Part-time Year 2 Timetable, 2012/2013

Year 2 part-time students must select as many options as necessary to complete a total of 120 credits of taught modules.

Provisional Part-time Year 2 timetable 2012/2013						
Day	Autumn			Spring		
	Module	Time	Room	Module	Time	Room
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday	LTT	5-8pm	ES	TMUL	6-9pm	MAL
Thursday	IntTech	6-9pm	MAL			
Friday						

KEY

- Pedagogy, Adaptivity and Technology (PAT) – 30 credits
- Research Methods in Learning Technologies (RMLT) – 30 credits
- Introduction to Software Development (ISD) – 30 credits
- Technologies for Mobile and Ubiquitous Learning (TMUL) – 15 credits
- Learning and Teaching with Technologies (LTT) – 30 credits
- Semantic Web (SW) – 15 credits
- Intelligent Technologies (IntTech) – 15 credits
- Object-Oriented Design and Programming (OODP) – 15 credits
- Component-Based Software Development (CBSD) – 15 credits

Timetable selectors

It is suggested that you use the blank matrices below to tentatively plan your programme prior to the induction evening when you will be able to discuss your module selections with the Programme Directors.

Full-time Timetable, 2011/2012

Provisional Full-time lecture timetable 2011/12						
Day	Autumn			Spring		
	Module	Time	Room	Module	Time	Room
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						

Part-time Year 1 Timetable, 2011/2012

Provisional Part-time Year 1 timetable 2011/12						
Day	Autumn			Spring		
	Module	Time	Room	Module	Time	Room
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						

Part-time Year 2 Timetable, 2012/2013

Provisional Part-time Year 2 timetable 2012/2013						
Day	Autumn			Spring		
	Module	Time	Room	Module	Time	Room
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						

Syllabus and reading lists

Lectures aim to introduce the key concepts of each module. The objectives of each module and the principal readings are circulated at the start of the term. Lecturers will specify, usually in the first lecture, whether or not specific books should be purchased for particular modules. Independent study is a key learning objective of the programme.

All modules have dedicated web pages that provide links to relevant online literature, lecture notes and coursework assignments.

Students can contact lecturers outside the classroom to discuss the material. They can meet lecturers during scheduled 'office hours' or can contact them via email either to discuss a problem or to make an appointment. Lecturers' contact details are given on the London Knowledge Lab web site (www.lkl.ac.uk) and in the Department's Student Handbook.

A number of modules require students to submit coursework as part of the assessment. Such coursework must always be the students' own work, except where explicitly noted. Students are required to confirm in writing or via email that each item of coursework submitted is indeed their own work. Birkbeck and the Institute of Education have strict guidelines and penalties associated with plagiarism, and routinely submit students' work to plagiarism detection services. More details are given in the "Administration and Assessment" section of this booklet and in the Department's Student Handbook.

Information about the Modules

Pedagogy, Adaptivity and Technology

The aim of the MSc in Learning Technologies is to provide academic grounding for the profession of “learning technologist” in all its forms. It therefore has to provide students with the technical and pedagogic knowledge to be able to critique the use of technology from the perspective of learning theory, teaching practice, and curriculum design, and to be capable of seeing the pedagogic potential of new digital technologies. This module aims to provide that grounding. The module also aims to develop an advanced level of understanding of the use of artificial intelligence techniques in the development of intelligent learning technologies, including intelligent system design methods, knowledge representation, learner modelling, communication and intelligent software evaluation. Approaches covered include Bayesian Networks and use of probabilistic reasoning, planning and the use of first and second order logic, and natural language processing.

See <http://www.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/courses/msclt/outline.php> for further details.

Research Methods in Learning Technologies

This module aims to prepare participants for practical work in the design, development and evaluation of learning technologies, covering the research methods and skills needed for undertaking the Masters Project. It enables students to enhance their research skills through development of the Masters Project proposal, including the research methodology and methods to be pursued and a critical review of the related literature. It also aims to familiarise students with ongoing areas of research into learning technologies at the London Knowledge Lab.

See <http://www.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/courses/msclt/outline.php> for further details.

Introduction to Software Development

This module aims to allow students who hold a first degree in a subject other than computing to gain understanding of solving computational problems and of the software development process. The principles of designing, implementing and testing programs are covered, with a specific focus on object-oriented design. The module covers the fundamental aspects of these techniques, and exemplifies them with respect to the Java programming language within a series of practical lab sessions.

See <http://www.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/courses/msclt/outline.php> for further details.

Technologies for Mobile and Ubiquitous Learning

This module focuses on the challenges of designing, developing and deploying mobile learning experiences, including: participatory design for understanding user needs,

opportunities for designing learning experiences, the role of context and context-awareness in mobile learning, and Android programming for mobile phones. The lab sessions are “hands-on” and cover managing user interaction and user interface design. Pervasive computing and RFID are also discussed, as a separate paradigm.

See <http://www.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/courses/msclt/outline.php> for further details.

Semantic Web

This module covers the principles of the Semantic Web and Ontologies, including languages for the Semantic Web (XML, XML Schema, RDF, RDFS, OWL, description logics), building and maintaining ontologies, and reasoning with ontologies. These techniques have a variety of applications in learning technologies: capturing the knowledge of experts in a particular subject domain; modelling learners, tasks and learning objects; and supporting personalisation and interoperability of learning systems.

See <http://www.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/courses/msclt/outline.php> for further details.

Intelligent Technologies

This module covers technical fundamentals of intelligent systems, discussing what functionalities different intelligent technologies can provide, how to choose the right technology for a given setting, and how intelligent systems are designed and implemented. The technologies discussed include data modelling, knowledge representation and reasoning (if-then rules, semantic networks, decision trees, ontologies), similarity matching, clustering, recommender systems, handling uncertainty, neural networks and evolutionary computing. These techniques have application in learning technologies by enabling *user-adaptive systems*, which aim to adapt their functionality to individual users' skills, aptitudes, knowledge levels and preferences.

See <http://www.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/courses/msclt/outline.php> for further details.

Object-oriented design and programming

This module covers Object-Oriented (OO) development in more depth than ISD, and follows on from that module. It introduces iterative software development processes and the tools used in many of these processes, among them the UML notation for expressing software designs. The goal of the module is to familiarise students with key aspects in OO software design, such as modularity and maintainability. The emphasis will be on when and why these aspects are important, especially in the case that the development time is restricted.

See <http://www.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/courses/msclt/outline.php> for further details.

Component-based software development

This module covers the design and implementation of software systems from components, which is often necessary for large-scale software development, and follows on from the ISD

and OODP modules. It introduces the major aspects of component frameworks (events, properties, introspection and reflection, persistence, packaging) and discusses some of the major established and emerging component frameworks (Java Beans, COM/DCOM, .NET, EJB, CCM).

See <http://www.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/courses/msclt/outline.php> for further details.

Learning and Teaching with Technologies

This module provides a critical introduction to key theories and methodologies relevant to learning and teaching with technologies in face-to-face, online and ‘blended’ settings. The module aims to help students develop a critical awareness of the potential and realities of ‘technology enhanced learning’ (TEL) – emphasising the design, development and evaluation of the technology-enhanced learning environment as a whole. This includes a focus on the teacher/lecturer acting as both the facilitator of technology-enhanced learning and as a source of knowledge needed to design effective TEL, a range of technological tools (both new and old) and a focus on learning that can be facilitated by and that emerges from the use of TEL. Case studies of innovative teaching and learning initiatives are used to provide a focus for informed critique and evaluation.

The objectives of this module are:

- **Theories of TEL:** to introduce key theories in the fields of psychology, cognitive science and education of relevance to technology enhanced learning;
- **Experience of TEL and evaluation:** to provide experience of a wide range of technologically mediated learning environments, of different design methods and of evaluating such environments for teaching and learning;
- **Practice in light of theory:** to relate the existing TEL designs and practical uses of technologies in educational settings to appropriate theories of learning and teaching.

Subjects covered by this module are:

- Key theories underpinning how we work with and how we design technologies for learning and teaching
- Design and use of technologies to support learning and teaching
- Key TEL design, implementation and evaluation methods and techniques
- Design and use technologies to assess learning, including Artificial Intelligence paradigms such as learner modelling
- Evaluation of technology-based learning environments

Module tutor: Kaska Porayska-Pomsta

Other lecturers: Sara Price, Diana Laurillard, Niall Winters, Manolis Mavrikis, Katerina Avramides, Martin Oliver

Assessment

The module assessment will consist of one 5000-word assignment at the end of the module. The assignment is typically split in two parts: in the first part the students are given the remit of producing a desk-based review and comparison of a couple of existing TEL technologies. In the second part the students will be given a choice of essay questions that will allow them to review the relevant educational theories that do or should underpin the technologies reviewed *OR* create and reflect critically upon a theoretically informed technology-enhanced

learning design. In the latter case, students will be expected to submit a 3500 word essay assignment with a 1500 word design output (such as an proposed extension to one of technologies reviewed in the first part, storyboard of how the system could be used in a specific learning context, etc.). These two components will be assessed holistically as one piece of work (with one overall mark).

Indicative Reading

- Pachler, N. (2005) 'Theories of learning and ICT' in Leask, M. and Pachler, N. (eds) '*Learning to Teach Using ICT in the Secondary School: A Companion to School Experience*' London, Routledge
- Leask, M and Younie, S (2001) 'Communal constructivist theory: information and communications technology pedagogy and internationalisation of the curriculum' *Journal of Information Technology for Teacher Education*, 10, 1&2, pp. 117–134.
- Cher Ping, L. (2002) 'A theoretical framework for the study of ICT in schools: a proposal' *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 33, 4, pp. 411-421
- Crook, C. (2002) 'The Social Character of Knowing and Learning: Implications of Cultural Psychology for Educational Technology' *Journal of Information Technology in Teacher Education*, 10, 19-36.
- Cox, M., Webb, M., Abbott, C., Blakeley, B., Beauchamp, T. and Rhodes, V. (2005) '*ICT and pedagogy: A review of the literature*' Nottingham, DfES
- Buzzetto-More, N. and Alade, A. (2006) 'Best Practices in e-Assessment' *Journal of Information Technology Education* 5, pp.251-269
- Richards, C. (2005) 'The design of effective ICT-supported learning activities: exemplary models, changing requirements, and new possibilities' *Language Learning & Technology* 9, 1, pp.60-79
- Winters, N. and Mor, Y. (2008) 'IDR: A participatory methodology for interdisciplinary design in technology enhanced learning' *Computers & Education*, 50, 2, pp. 579-600
- Woolf, B. (2010) *Building Intelligent Interactive Tutors*, Morgan Kaufmann.
- Mwanza, D. and Engeström, Y. (2003) 'Pedagogical Adeptness in the Design of E-learning Environments: Experiences from the Lab@Future Project' in G. Richards (Ed.) '*Proceedings of World Conference on E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare, and Higher Education*' Chesapeake VA, AACE.

The Project

Each student on the MSc in Learning Technologies will undertake an individual project of their own devising, supervised by academic staff from the London Knowledge Lab. This may be *EITHER* an Implementation Project aiming to design, develop and evaluate a substantial software system targeted at a specific learning setting; *OR* a Research Dissertation, aiming to perform a substantial piece of social science or education research into a currently emerging technology-oriented phenomenon in teaching and learning.

An Implementation project will need to show also an appreciation and knowledge of the pedagogical aspects of the learning setting being targeted. Conversely, a Research dissertation will need to show also an appreciation and knowledge of the capabilities and potential of the digital technologies being applied to the particular education issue under investigation.

Each project has a primary supervisor whose expertise best matches the primary focus of the project. Each project also has a secondary supervisor, who is able to provide guidance on pedagogical aspects (for Implementation projects) or technology aspects (for Research Dissertations). Students are encouraged to come up with their own ideas for projects, and to arrange their own locations for evaluation studies with appropriate target users. In order to arrange supervision for their project, a student should discuss their ideas with the Project Tutor in the first instance, or with the lecturer who seems the most appropriate for the topic.

The project proposal, critical literature review and research methodology aspects of the project will be undertaken during the Spring term as part of the Research Methods in Learning Technologies (RMLT) module (N.B. this is the Spring term of Year 1 for part-time students). These aspects of the project will be assessed as part of the assessment for the RMLT module.

Work on the project will continue during the Summer term, to be completed by the end of September by full-time students and by the end of September of Year 2 by part-time students.

In carrying out the project students will be able to demonstrate skills in planning and undertaking a research, design, development and evaluation task that goes beyond the coursework assignments of the taught modules in its scope and depth. They will be expected to critically compare their work with existing approaches, place their approach in the wider context, and evaluate critically their own contribution. They will also gain experience in communicating complex ideas, concepts, approaches, methodologies and techniques to others, possibly from different disciplines, by writing a comprehensive, self-contained project report.

Students who wish to work in schools as part of their project will need to be aware of CRB requirements for user studies, and any students working in this context will receive appropriate training and advice.

Teaching Staff

Project Tutor: Richard Noss

Primary and secondary supervisor

Assessment

Written project report of *either* 8,000-12,000 words for an Implementation Project, plus related technical Appendices, *or* 18,000-22,000 words for a Research Dissertation.

Reading

As recommended by the supervisors

Student Support

Every student is allocated a **personal tutor** in the first weeks of the programme. The personal tutor is someone whom students can contact to discuss any problems of a non-academic nature. These may relate to special needs or personal problems that may affect the student's academic performance. The Department also has a disability officer whom students can contact.

Academic problems should first be addressed to the lecturer concerned. If the problem is not resolved or it does not relate to a specific module, then the Programme Director should be contacted. A more detailed complaints procedure is given in the Department's Student Handbook and in the College's "Student Complaints Procedure" which is available from the from the My Birkbeck webpages at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/aig> .

Another forum for discussion is the MSc in Learning Technologies **Student-Staff Exchange Committee**. Student representatives, who are elected by the students, meet lecturing staff on the programme once a term to exchange ideas about the programme. This allows students to communicate their shared concerns in an informal manner, and for the staff to react and respond speedily to address their concerns. More details regarding student support are described in the Department's Student Handbook.

The **Birkbeck Students' Union** provides help and advice to students – information about their services can be found linked from the Students' Union webpage: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/su/>

Financial support advice is provided by the **Student Financial Support Office** (tel: 020 7631 6362), 12-5.30pm Monday to Thursday. At Birkbeck, we believe that lack of finances should not be a barrier to you studying so we provide financial support packages and bursaries. Information on financial support is available online at: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/finance/>

Administration and Assessment

The College's general rules and regulations governing degree programmes are accessible from MyBirkbeck, at: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules>

Requirements for the Award of the MSc Learning Technologies

The programme is modular, and students will be assessed in each of their taught modules and in the project module. To pass a module, students must obtain a mark of at least 50%.

To be awarded the MSc degree, students must pass the project module (which is 60 CATS points) and taught modules amounting to 120 CATS points. They must pass the PAT and RMLT modules and in addition obtain an average mark of at least 50% over all the modules (in calculating the average mark, the module marks are weighted to reflect their credit value). Up to 30 credits of taught modules (other than PAT or RMLT) can be failed provided the mark obtained in each of these modules is 40% or higher.

To be awarded the MSc with a mark of Merit, students must obtain an average mark of at least 60% over all the modules.

To be awarded the MSc with a mark of Distinction, students must obtain a mark of at least 70% in the project module, pass all the taught modules, and obtain an average mark of at least 70% over all the modules.

In making its recommendation, the Exam Board will take into account all aspects of the student's performance on the programme.

Several modules will be assessed through coursework only: PAT, RMLT, TMUL, LTT and the Project. There will be a 2-hour written exam in ISD, OODP, CBSD, SW and IntTech, with a coursework component in all of these as well, except for IntTech. The written exams, coursework and project will all be double-marked. All coursework elements and the project will be submitted electronically, and will be subjected to plagiarism detection software.

First year part-time students: Normally five to seven 15-credit modules (or pro-rata 30-credit ones) will be taken in the first year of study. Written exams for taught modules taken in the first year will be examined in May/June of that year. Students must normally pass at least 30 credits of modules in order to proceed to the second year of study.

Second year part-time students: Written exams for taught modules taken in the second year will be examined in May/June of that year. Students must pass at least 90 credits, obtain an average mark of at least 50%, and a mark of at least 40% in any failed module, in order to proceed with the programme of study. The project report will be submitted in September of the second year.

Full-time students: Written exams for taught modules taken will be examined in May/June. Students must pass at least 90 credits, obtain an average mark of at least 50%, and a mark of at

least 40% in any failed module, in order to proceed with the programme of study. The project report will be submitted in September.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend all lectures, tutorials and laboratory sessions for the modules they are taking. Attendance lists will be kept and monitored.

Resit policy: Students who fail to meet one of the criteria for the award of the MSc may be allowed to resit a failed project or failed taught module. A student who fails a module at the first attempt is allowed just one more attempt to pass it, normally in the following year.

Students may ask the Examination Board to consider the award of a **PgDip in Learning Technologies** provided they have passed taught modules to the value of 120 credits (no compensation for failed taught modules is allowed however).

Announcement of Results

The Examination Board meets in July to consider the results of the written exams and coursework, and in November to consider the results of the projects and to award the degree.

Shortly after the meeting of the Exam Board you will receive a letter from the Department about your results. Your results and grades will be confirmed officially by a letter some time later by the College.

Please keep the Department notified of any change of address; the letters sent to you after the Exam Board go to whatever address the Department holds for you. The College letters go to whatever address you put on your examination entry forms.

Candidates are also offered the option of receiving photocopies of their marked exam scripts. The letter that goes out after the July Exam Board contains a form on which candidates can make this request. A charge is made for this service.

Students who have not paid their fees are given *no information at all* about their examination results.

Exam Entry Forms

You receive your exam entry forms from the Registry and return them to the Postgraduate Administrator in the Department's admin office. You have to list all modules (including the project) that you want to be assessed that year.

Deferral

In **exceptional cases**, students may be permitted to defer the written exams and/or the project to the following year. They must apply by filling in a deferral form (available from the Postgraduate Administrator) setting out the reasons for wishing to defer. This needs to be done before **1 May**. A student who defers an element of assessment has to enter for that element the following year; normally no further deferrals are permitted.

Simply not turning up for an exam or failing to submit a coursework or project, without permission to defer, will be considered to be the same as failing it, in the sense that it will count as one of the two attempts that you are permitted to make at passing that element, except when this is due to illness or other reason beyond your control (see “Mitigating Circumstances” section below). In these cases, documentary evidence must be submitted to the Programme Administrator and this evidence must be deemed to be satisfactory by the College. Students who withdraw from or miss an exam are usually required to enter the exam the next year.

Late Submission for Assessment

Following recommendations of the Academic Board and the Department’s Teaching Committee, the process laid out below is in operation for dealing with late submission of items of assessment (including coursework and projects) in this MSc Programme.

(i) Extensions to deadlines are not allowed. The module leader or Project tutor specifies an absolute cut off deadline for late submission, as well as the normal submission deadline. The ***absolute cut off deadline will be no more than 10 working days after the normal submission.***

(ii) It is Departmental policy to accept and mark late items of assessment submitted by the cut off deadline (see point i). Students do not need to negotiate new deadlines and there is no need to obtain prior consent of the module leader or project tutor in order to submit late (but by the cut off deadline). The Department is unable to accept submissions after the cut off deadline.

(iii) Any assessment submitted late is given two marks: a mark of 50% assuming it is of a pass standard, and the “real mark” that would have been awarded if the work had not been late. Both marks are given to the student on a feedback sheet. If the work is not of a pass standard a single mark is given.

(iv) If a student believes that they have good cause to be excused the penalty for late submission, they must make a mitigating circumstances claim (see the “Mitigating Circumstances” section below) for consideration by the Mitigation Sub-Committee (see point v below). The claim form and accompanying documentary evidence must be submitted within 7 days of the cut off deadline. If no such documentation is received prior to the meeting of the Mitigation Sub-Committee the “real mark” will not be considered and the penalty mark will stand. When circumstances, such as serious accident or illness, or long-term hospitalization, prevent a student from submitting evidence in time, the absolute cut off deadline for submitting accompanying documentation is the first date of the examination period as specified by the College each academic year (typically examinations at Birkbeck start in the first week of May).

(v) All requests are held over and considered by a sub-group of the relevant Exam Board prior to a meeting of the full Exam Board. This sub-group, called the Mitigation Sub-Committee, will meet termly and/or prior to the full Exam Board, as appropriate, and its results are presented to the full Exam Board.

Mitigating Circumstances

The Academic Board in March 2007 approved the following guidelines for dealing with mitigating circumstances in relation to examinations and other forms of assessment in order to ensure consistent and fair practice across the College. For further information, students may consult the document on mitigating circumstances linked from:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/administration/assessment/coursework/mitigating-circumstances>

A Mitigating Circumstances claim should be submitted if valid detrimental circumstances result in:

- the late or non-submission of assessment;
- non-attendance of examination(s);
- poor performance in assessment.

Principles: Consideration by Boards of Examiners of claims for mitigating or extenuating circumstances are founded on the following principles:

- that students are ordinarily expected to meet all deadlines for coursework and to attend all examinations, as prescribed in the Programme Regulations, and to make a 'reasonable attempt' to answer examination questions, coursework assignments or other modes of assessment;
- that it is the students' responsibility to submit details in writing and in advance (where possible) of any mitigating circumstances they would like the Board of Examiners to take into consideration;
- that information provided by students in support of such claims shall be regarded as confidential;
- that penalties may be incurred by late- or non-submission of coursework by the due deadline or by failure to attend and attempt a prescribed examination.

Mitigating Circumstances: Not all 'circumstances' warrant the same consideration. Some are clearly beyond the reasonable control of students and some are not. The examples given below are not exhaustive but serve as a guide to what Boards of Examiners will regard as acceptable 'mitigating circumstances' when making academic judgements. In all instances, appropriate certification (e.g. medical certificate, crime report etc.) must be provided for a circumstance beyond the reasonable control of the student to become eligible for consideration.

Examples of circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the student:

- bereavement (near relative only)
- serious accident or illness
- serious infectious disease
- burglary and theft
- childbirth

Examples of situations which may be considered beyond the reasonable control of the student:

- medical operation (if approved prior to the point of assessment or an emergency)

- hospital tests (if approved prior to the point of assessment or an emergency)
- being taken ill during an examination
- significant accident, injury, acute ailment or condition
- unanticipated and unavoidable professional obligations
- private or public transport failure leading to delays of more than 1 hour (corroborative evidence is required to verify such a delay)

Examples of circumstances that would NOT ordinarily be considered mitigating circumstances:

- accidents to friend or relatives (unless within 3 days prior to deadline or examination or where student is sole carer)
- family illness (except in an emergency or where the student is the sole carer)
- examination nerves
- feeling generally anxious, depressed or stressed (unless medically certificated and notified in advance i.e. at least 2 weeks)
- clash with paid employment
- minor accidents or injuries
- pregnancy
- cold, cough, upper respiratory tract infection, throat infection, unspecified viral infection
- childcare problems that could have been anticipated
- domestic problems (unless supported by independent evidence)
- mistaking the deadline, or time management problems (including alarm not going off)
- private or public transport failure leading to delays of less than 1 hour
- general financial problems
- legal problems (unless required to attend Court on the day of an examination or assessment)
- holidays or booked travel arrangements
- house moves
- notes burned or stolen (unless supported by a fire or police report)
- intermittent or last minute computing equipment problems (discs, machines, printers, viruses)
- handing-in problems
- inclement weather (unless exceptional/severe conditions)
- ignorance of the Regulations or examination/assessment arrangement

If a student feels their circumstances warrant consideration by the Board of Examiners they should submit a *MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES CLAIM FORM* (obtainable at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/administration/assessment/coursework/mitigating-circumstances>) to the Programme Administrator at the earliest opportunity, and within 7 days of the assessment deadline or examination. In that form, students should state whether the circumstances relate to non-attendance at an examination or late submission of an assignment and should include supporting evidence (e.g. a medical certificate giving the nature and duration of any illness). They may inform their personal tutor, in confidence, of any problem they may not wish to disclose in writing. **Students should be aware that discussing their**

claim with a member of staff does not constitute a submission of a claim of mitigating circumstances.

For a claim to be accepted a student must produce independent documentary evidence to show that the circumstances:

- a) have detrimentally affected their performance/submission/attendance in assessment or will do so;
- b) were unforeseen;
- c) were out of their control and could not have been prevented;
- d) relate directly to the timing of the assessment affected.

Examples of acceptable documentary evidence

- evidence (e.g. death certificate or letter from GP confirming bereavement)
- letter from lawyer, hospital, GP or employer

Examples of non-acceptable documentary evidence

- self-certification of illness
- letter written by a friend or acquaintance

Resitting Elements of the Assessment

One resit (but only one) is allowed for each element. You may resit the coursework of a taught module or the written exam of a taught module or the project if your marks for that element are below 50%.

There are no special resit exams; students resit exams alongside the other candidates. They normally do so a year after their first attempt. Where the syllabus of the module has changed, we set a paper that is suitable for resit candidates, providing alternative questions where necessary. Note, however, that we do this only for candidates from the previous year, not from further in the past.

Enrolment as a Revision Student or Project-Only Student

It is not essential to re-enrol in order to resit written exams; you may simply complete the examination entry forms (obtainable from the Postgraduate Administrator in February/March) and pay an exam entrance fee. Non-enrolled students may not attend lectures or use the Department's facilities. They may, however, make use of the Birkbeck library, for a fee of £50 (you need a letter from the Postgraduate Administrator confirming your status).

If you wish to attend some of the lecture courses again or to resit some of the coursework, you must enrol as a part-time Revision Student. In this case, you enrol in October and you pay half the regular part-time fee for the year.

It is also possible to enrol as a part-time Revision Student at Easter, for the remainder of the academic year, if you wish to attend revision lectures in the summer term or to submit answers

to past exam questions to the relevant lecturers for marking. In this case the fee is one quarter of the year's regular part-time fee.

Candidates who enrol as Revision Students do not have to pay a further fee for the examination entrance.

Students who wish to resit the project need to enrol as a Project-Only student for the period that they receive supervision for their project.

Examinations

Exams are scheduled by the College examinations office on specified dates: these are posted well in advance on the College and programme web sites and are non-negotiable. Students are required to sit their exams at the scheduled time and place at Birkbeck.

Note that examinations are held during the day, so part-time students will have to make arrangements with their employers to take leave of absence.

Plagiarism

The College's Assessment Offences Policy defines plagiarism as "the submission for assessment of material (written, visual or oral) originally produced by another person or persons, without correct acknowledgement, in such a way that the work could be assumed to be the student's own. Plagiarism may involve the unattributed use of another person's work, ideas, opinions, theory, statistics, graphs, models, paintings, artefacts, performance, computer code, drawings, quotations of another person's actual spoken or written words, or paraphrases of another person's spoken or written words".

There are many ways of plagiarising the work of others. Some examples are given below:

- Copying sections of text without using quotation marks and without appropriate acknowledgement; for example, copying text from websites, encyclopaedias, books or articles, or from documents written by students who did a similar project.
- Copying text and making very minor changes, and without appropriate acknowledgement. This is an example of unacceptable paraphrasing.
- Copying a picture or photo from the Internet, without appropriate acknowledgement. If you use images protected by copyright you must also obtain permission from the copyright owner. See the Library for guidance.
- Using another person's numerical spreadsheet, software or results, without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Duplicating your own work, for example by submitting almost exactly the same work for two different assignments, e.g. a piece of coursework and the MSc project.
- Using code developed by another person without acknowledging the original author as the person who developed it.

The College considers plagiarism a serious offence, and as such it warrants disciplinary action. This is particularly important in assessed pieces of work where plagiarism goes so far as to

dishonestly claim credit for ideas that have been taken from someone else. According to paragraph 7 of the College's Assessment Offences Policy, "a student who knowingly assists another student to plagiarise (for example by willingly giving them their own work to copy from) is committing an assessment offence." The College's Assessment Offences Policy identifies various types of plagiarism and is available online at the MyBirkbeck webpage <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/administration/assessment/offences/plagiarism>

Each piece of submitted coursework or project must have an "Academic Declaration" signed by the student(s), which certifies that the authors have read and understood the sections of plagiarism in the Department's Student Handbook and confirm that the work is their own, with the work of others fully acknowledged. Submissions must be also accompanied by a declaration giving us permission to submit coursework to a plagiarism-testing database to which the College subscribes.

The Academic Declaration text should include the following statements: *"The author(s) certify that they have read and understood the sections of plagiarism in the Departmental Handbook and confirm that the work is their own, with the work of others fully acknowledged. The author(s) give permission to submit their coursework to the plagiarism-testing database used by the College."*

If you submit work without acknowledgement or reference of other students (or other people), then this is one of the most serious forms of plagiarism. When you wish to include material that is not the result of your own efforts alone, you should make a reference to their contribution, just as if that were a published piece of work. You should put a clear acknowledgement (either in the text itself, or as a footnote) identifying the students that you have worked with, and the contribution that they have made to your submission.

The "College Guideline for Prevention of Plagiarism" (see <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support/plagiarism/plagiarism-guide>) States that: "Schools have the right to request any piece of assessment to be submitted for screening by a College approved plagiarism detection service. A deadline for this submission may also be set by the relevant School. Failure to comply with any such request, or failure to meet the relevant deadline, will constitute an assessment offence and will be dealt with according to the College Policy on Assessment Offences."

For an update on procedures for dealing with plagiarism in the department, students can consult the following document: <http://vili.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/intranet/s/policy/plagiarism-procedure.pdf>

The College offers the learning module "Avoiding Plagiarism" on Blackboard VLE to all students. This module will help you understand plagiarism and explain in detail how one can avoid plagiarism. Below some examples are given from this module.

Citing other peoples' work properly

Citations give brief details of the source at the point in the text where the source is used. Citations using the Harvard system show the author and date of publication and the page number for quotations. For example:

Oakshott (2001) argues that ...

or:

Oakshott (2001, p. 3) argues that "democracy is dead".

If a quotation is longer than two or three lines, it is often indented using block formatting. By convention, block quotations do not usually need quotation marks - check with your course lecturer for guidance. For example:

Worsley (2002) argues that Karl Marx is still very influential:

Karl Marx has probably affected the course of twentieth-century history more than any other single thinker. Because of this, his ideas have generated a vast output of writings (Worsley, 2002, p. 1).

Referencing

References should include the full bibliographic information about the source, such as the author(s)' name(s), date of publication, title of work, place of publication, and publisher. This information is usually listed in a section called Reference List or Bibliography at the end of your document. The key principle is that you should give enough information to allow another person to find the source for themselves.

Here are some examples using the Harvard referencing system:

When you are referring to a book:

Lewin, K., 1951. *Field Theory in Social Science*. New York: Harper and Row.

When you are referring to a chapter in a book, where 'ed.' means editor, and 'edn.' means 'edition':

Piaget, J., 1970. Piaget's theory. In: P. Smith, ed., *Handbook of Child Psychology*. 3rd edn. New York: Wiley, 1970, pp. 34-76.

When you are referring to a journal article:

Holmqvist, M., 2003. A Dynamic Model of Intra- and Interorganizational Learning. *Organization Studies*, 24(1), 95-123.

When you are referring to a webpage:

W3C, Web Accessibility Guidelines and Techniques, available online at <http://www.w3.org/WAI/guid-tech.html>. Last accessed 12/05/2007.

Independent of their type (e.g. book, article, webpage), all references should be included at the end of a document in alphabetical order starting from the author's name as in the example above.

Paraphrasing

Here are some examples from the Avoiding Plagiarism module that might help you to understand which forms of paraphrasing are acceptable and which are treated as plagiarism.

First, the original extract is given, taken from the book, *Marx and Marxism*, by Peter Worsley.

Karl Marx has probably affected the course of twentieth-century history more than any other single thinker. Because of this, his ideas have generated a vast output of writings, ranging from texts written by revolutionaries aimed at telling people how to do revolution - how to carry on Marx's work of demolishing capitalism and creating a new socialist society - to the many hundreds of volumes dedicated to proving that Marx was wrong about practically everything.

Acceptable practice: Worsley (2002) suggests that Karl Marx has had a significant impact on the course of twentieth-century history. He argues that Marx's ideas have led to a great deal of writing, across a spectrum from promoting his call for revolution to trying to show he was wrong in his analysis and predictions.

Plagiarism: Karl Marx, the inspiration for revolutionary activity in many countries, has probably affected the course of 20C history more than almost any other thinker. Because of this, his ideas have generated a vast output of writings, ranging from books written about revolution - how to demolish capitalism and create a new socialist society - to books dedicated to proving that Marx was wrong about practically everything.

Copying the whole text without using quotation marks and without appropriate acknowledgement is considered plagiarism: Karl Marx has probably affected the course of twentieth-century history more than any other single thinker. Because of this, his ideas have generated a vast output of writings, ranging from texts written by revolutionaries aimed at telling people how to do revolution - how to carry on Marx's work of demolishing capitalism and creating a new socialist society - to the many hundreds of volumes dedicated to proving that Marx was wrong about practically everything.

Birkbeck College Resources

Birkbeck Library

Although lectures and computing sessions are essential elements of your course, success in learning depends largely on the reading and research that you undertake. Most items on module reading lists can be found in the Birkbeck and Institute of Education Libraries and it is important that you familiarise yourself with these Libraries as soon as you can. At postgraduate level, you will also be expected to use other libraries during your studies.

The entrance to Birkbeck Library is on the ground floor of the main building in Malet Street. Your College ID card gives you automatic access to the Library. There is no need to register. The opening times of the Library are designed to meet the needs of part-time students in full-time work – see <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/> for details of opening hours.

You can borrow up to 15 items and they can be renewed as long as no-one else requests them. Most books can be borrowed for 3 weeks. Some books, videos and DVDs can be borrowed for 1 week. A few items can only be issued for 1 day. There is also a Reading Room Collection with reference access to key course readings.

Please be a responsible Library user. The smooth running of the Library depends on your co-operation. Please renew or return items promptly, especially if someone else has requested them. If you fail to return items on time you will incur fines and your borrowing rights will be suspended. Students who have overdue items at the end of the academic year will have examination results withheld until the items are returned.

You can access a whole host of electronic journals and databases from any PC in College. The majority of resources can also be accessed from outside College with your IT Services (ITS) username and password.

The Library website is at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib>. As well as giving comprehensive information about the Library's services and collections, you can also:

- Search the Library catalogue, renew your books and place reservations on items that are out on loan.
- Read articles in over 25,000 electronic journal titles and newspapers.
- Search databases to help you find out what has been written about the subject you are researching, including the *ACM* and *IEEE Digital Libraries*, *Business Source Premier*, *Nexis UK* and the *Science and Social Sciences Citation Index*.
- Access past exam papers.
- Work through *LIFE* – an online tutorial to help you make the most of the Library.

Birkbeck students can also use a range of other libraries. Students have reference access to most University of London college libraries. In addition, postgraduate students can join the

SCONUL Access Scheme which allows access to most other higher education libraries with limited borrowing rights. See the Library web site for more information.

If a book you need is not available in the Library or you require any assistance using the resources or finding information, please ask at the Help Desk. Telephone: 020 7631 6063. Alternatively, contact your Subject Librarian, **Kate Purcell**, directly. Telephone: 020 7631 6062. Email k.purcell@bbk.ac.uk

Birkbeck eLibrary

As well as its physical holdings, the Library has a comprehensive range of e-resources including bibliographic databases (which tell you what has been written on a topic), and electronic journals. Most of the electronic resources can be accessed from outside the College using your IT Services username and password. If you did not receive this upon enrolment, please ask for them at IT Services reception (Malet Street).

The LAMP Service (**LibrAry Materials by Post**) is a subscription based service which enables you to have books and photocopies of articles posted to your home address. You may find it particularly useful if you are not able to visit the library frequently. Birkbeck students with disabilities may be able to join the service for free on the recommendation of the College Disability Officer, Mark Pimm. If you think you may be eligible for free membership, please first contact Mark Pimm in the Disability Office.

The College Library also runs an interlibrary loan service to enable you to obtain copies of books and articles not held in its own collections. As it can take a couple of weeks to obtain copies of requested materials, you are advised to plan ahead in your general reading and essay preparation so as to make use of this facility. Please note: a charge of £1 will be made for each interlibrary loan request received and there is a limit of 10 requests in progress at any one time.

An introduction to the Library and bibliographical skills is timetabled at the start of your course at which you will meet the Subject Librarian who looks after the collection. They will introduce you to the Library and its electronic resources. In addition, the Library has an online tutorial called LIFE (Library Induction for Everyone) which is always available: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/life/> which has a module in it on 'Researching a topic'.

Other Resources and Organisations

Birkbeck Student Union

You are automatically a member of the Birkbeck Students' Union, the University of London Union and NUS upon taking up the offer of a place to study at Birkbeck. NUS cards are available online (NUS Extra) or from the Union Office, Malet Street. Application can be made to become a member of the International Students' Association by completing a form that can also be obtained from their shop.

Location and Telephone: Offices on the 4th Floor of the extension building in Malet Street. General Union Office is in Room 456, Tel: 020 7631 6335. Enquiries: administrator@bcsu.bbk.ac.uk . Visit the website at <http://www.birkbeckunion.org/> .

Counselling

The Students' Union offers counselling free of charge.

Birkbeck Evening Nursery

Birkbeck College has an Evening Nursery, which is available for students and current members of staff and accepts children aged 2-10 years. In exceptional circumstances, children up to 12 will be accepted. However, Nursery Staff reserve the right not to accept older children if they are disruptive. Full details, including opening times, may be found at: www.bbk.ac.uk/pers/nursery.

Career Development

Most students are interested in developing their careers, either within their current field of work or in a completely new direction. **The Specialist Institutions' Careers Service [SICS]**, part of The Careers Group, University of London, offers great expertise and experience in working with students and graduates of **all** ages and at **all** stages of career development. And it's Birkbeck's next-door neighbour!

During term-time they offer an Early Evening Advisory Service specifically and exclusively for evening students and a Drop-In Advice Service, which is always very popular with the Birkbeck students.

Longer Advisory Interviews can be arranged if necessary - for complete career beginners, for people wanting a practice job interview, and for every stage and situation in between.

They also offer Psychometric Testing and Personality Assessment Workshops, Employer Presentations, Computer-based Career Guidance Programs, Insight Career Courses as well as invaluable information on Course Funding.

For more information and opening times visit the SICS website at:
<http://www.careers.lon.ac.uk/sics> .

Disability Statement

At Birkbeck there are students with a wide range of disabilities including dyslexia, visual or hearing impairments, mobility difficulties, mental health needs, HIV, ME, respiratory conditions etc. Many of them have benefited from the advice and support provided by the College's disability service.

The Disability Office

The College has a Disability Office located on the main corridor of the Malet Street building. We have a Disability Service Manager, Mark Pimm, and a Disability Advisor, Steve Short.

Mark is your first point of referral for disability enquiries at the College whilst Steve is for dyslexia. They can provide advice and support on travel and parking, physical access, the Disabled Students' Allowance, special equipment, personal support, examination arrangements etc. If you have a disability or dyslexia, we recommend you come to our drop in session where we can discuss support and make follow up appointments as necessary. The drop in sessions are between 4pm and 6pm Monday to Friday.

At your first appointment at the Disability Office they will ask you to complete a Confidentiality Consent Form. This allows you to state who in the College can be informed of your disability. Remember, if you wish, we do not need to inform people of the exact nature of your disability, just your disability related needs.

They will also complete an Individual Student Support Agreement form, confirming your support requirements and send this to your School and relevant Departments at the College so they are informed of your needs.

Access at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's main buildings have wheelchair access, accessible lifts and toilets, our reception desks have induction loops for people with hearing impairments and we have large print and tactile signage. Disabled parking, lockers, specialist seating in lectures and seminars and portable induction loops etc can all be arranged by the Disability Office.

The Disabled Students' Allowance

UK and most EU students with disabilities on undergraduate and postgraduate courses are eligible to apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). The DSA usually provides **thousands of pounds worth of support** and all the evidence shows that students who receive it are more likely to complete their courses successfully. The Disability Office can provide further information on the DSA and can assist you in applying to Student Finance England for this support.

The Personal Assistance Scheme

Some students need a personal assistant to provide support on their course, for example a note-taker, sign language interpreter, reader, personal assistant, disability mentor or dyslexia support tutor. Birkbeck uses a specialist agency to recruit Personal Assistants and they can assist you with recruiting, training and paying your personal assistant. Please contact Steve for information on this scheme.

Support in your School

The provision which can be made for students with disabilities by Schools is set out in the Procedures for Students with Disabilities. This is available from the Disability Office and the Disability website (see below).

As mentioned above your School will receive a copy of your Individual Student Support Agreement from the Disability Office. This will make specific recommendations about the support you should receive from the School.

Support in IT Services and Library Services

There is a comprehensive range of specialist equipment for students with disabilities in IT Services. This includes software packages for dyslexic students (TextHELP Read and Write and Inspiration), screen reading and character enhancing software for students with visual impairments, specialist scanning software, large monitors, ergonomic mice and keyboards, specialist orthopaedic chairs etc. For advice and assistance please contact Disability IT Support. There is also a range of specialist equipment in the Library including a CCTV reading machine for visually impaired students as well as specialist orthopaedic chairs and writing slopes. The Disability Office refers all students with disabilities to the Library Access Support service who provides a comprehensive range of services for students with disabilities.

Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia)

Mature students who experienced problems at school are often unaware that these problems may result from their being dyslexic. Whilst dyslexia cannot be cured, you can learn strategies which make studying significantly easier. If you think you may be dyslexic you should contact Steve, he can screen you and where appropriate refer you to an Educational Psychologist for a dyslexia assessment. These assessments cost £215. Some students can receive assistance in meeting this cost from their employer. In exceptional cases students may receive assistance from the Access to Learning Fund.

Examinations

Students with disabilities and dyslexia may be eligible for special arrangements for examinations e.g. extra time, use of a word processor, amanuensis, enlarged examination papers etc. In order to receive special arrangements a student must provide Medical Evidence of their disability (or an Educational Psychologist's Report if you are dyslexic) to the Disability Office. For School examinations you should contact your Programme Director to request special arrangements at least 2 weeks before the examination. For main College summer examinations you are given the opportunity to declare that you require special provision on your assessment entry form. Students who require provision should then attend an appointment with the Disability Office to discuss and formalise the appropriate arrangements. The closing date for making special examination arrangements in College examinations is the 15th March and beyond this date consideration will only be given to emergency cases.

The Disability Handbook

The Disability Handbook provides detailed information on the support available from the College. Copies are available from all main reception areas, the Disability Office and from the College disability web site at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/disability>

For further information or to make an appointment to see Mark or Steve, please call Steve Short (Disability Advisor) on 020 7631 6336 or email disability@bbk.ac.uk.

Disability and Student Support Team Contact details:

Mark Pimm

Disability Co-ordinator
Room G057 Registry
Birkbeck College
Malet Street
London WC1E 7HX
Telephone: 020 7631 6315
Email: m.pimm@bbk.ac.uk

Steve Short

Disability Administrator
Room G057 Registry
Birkbeck College
Malet Street
London WC1E 7HX
Telephone: 020 7631 6336
Email: disability@bbk.ac.uk

Lisa Mayer

Assistant Examinations Officer
Telephone: 020 7631 6598
l.mayer@bbk.ac.uk

The Student Financial Support Office

Telephone: 020 7631 6362

Jackie Barnes

Examinations Officer
Telephone: 020 7631 6385

President of the Student Union

Telephone: 020 7631 6365
Email: president@bcsu.bbk.ac.uk
Web address: www.bbk.ac.uk/su

IT Services (ITS)

Access to College IT facilities and services is controlled by using a username and password. IT Services (ITS) usernames and passwords are allocated to registered students of Birkbeck College.

Accepted applicants for undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses will receive details from ITS of the username and password for the purpose of on-line enrolment. Following completion of enrolment, registered students will be able to access the full range of IT services. Details of the allocated email address and an *Overview to ITS for Students* are included in the communication students will receive from ITS. Please note the account and email address are not operational until the enrolment has been completed, until then the username and password can only be used for on-line enrolment.

Returning students should continue to use the same account they were previously allocated. If you forget your password, visit www.bbk.ac.uk/its/mycomputeraccount - if you have registered an external email address with the Registry then it may be possible to send you a new password, otherwise you will have to contact the ITS Helpdesk.

You are expected to be familiar with the College Computing Regulations which are available at:

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/policies_az/computing_regulations

ITS resources include:

- PC workstation rooms
- Wireless network
- Wide range of general office and specialist computer applications
- Web-based electronic mail
- Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment
- Assistive technology facilities
- Training workshops and self-training materials
- Remote access to College electronic resources and services from home or work

You can find out more about these services and others by visiting our website at:

www.bbk.ac.uk/its

Your Birkbeck email address will be used for official Birkbeck correspondence so you should check it at least once a week. Alternatively you can forward all email sent to this address to another email address that you do regularly check, instructions on how to do this are on the ITS website.

There is a text message news flash service which enables students to receive free urgent messages from the College via their mobile phones. You are encouraged to subscribe. Full details are available at: www.bbk.ac.uk/its/services/sms

Students are allocated personal storage space on a networked file server. Files will remain on the server for one year after you leave.

Your ITS username, password and email address will normally remain valid as long as you remain a paid up undergraduate or postgraduate student of Birkbeck College. However, if we have reason to think that the security of an account has been compromised your account could be suspended without warning and you will need to visit the ITS Helpdesk to have it reinstated.

ITS Helpdesk Opening Hours		
Ground Floor, Malet Street Main Building		
Term time:	Monday to Friday	9:00am to 8:00pm
Vacations:	Monday to Friday	9:00am to 6:00pm
Tel: 020 7631 6543		Email: its-helpdesk@bbk.ac.uk

Your ITS username and password will not necessarily work on systems that are locally managed by Schools or departments. Schools/Departments provide details of access to these.

Appendix – Common Awards Scheme

Birkbeck, University of London Common Awards Scheme

Postgraduate Programmes

Introduction

1. The majority of Birkbeck's postgraduate programmes are offered as part of the College's Common Awards Scheme. Programmes within the Scheme have common regulations, and a common structure, and this makes it possible for you to take modules from other programmes across the College (subject to programme regulations and timetable constraints).

2. This paper gives a brief introduction to the Common Awards Scheme. Further details on regulations and policies that form the Common Awards Scheme can be accessed via:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules>

Structure of Programmes

3. All programmes offered as part of the Common Awards Scheme consist of modules, each of which are "credit-rated". In order to achieve your award you will need to gain at least the following, and meet the requirements outlined in your programme specification:

Qualification	Credits needed	Min at upper level	Max at lower level	Birkbeck common awards schemes
Masters Degree	180	150 level 7	30 level 6 (not included in calculation of classification)	4 modules plus dissertation
Postgraduate Diploma	120	90 level 7	30 level 6 (not included in calculation of classification)	4 modules
Postgraduate Certificate	60	60 level 7	n/a	2 modules

4. The Common Awards Scheme offers, for postgraduate programmes, half modules (15 credits), modules (30 credits), double modules (60 credits), or exceptionally triple modules (90 credits) and quadruple modules (120 credits – normally for MRes dissertations)

5. The detailed requirements for each programme are published in the relevant programme specification. Each module on a programme is designated as one of the following:

core the module must be taken and passed to allow the student to complete the degree

compulsory the module must be taken, and Programme Regulations must stipulate the minimum assessment that must be *attempted*

option students may choose a stipulated number of modules from a range made available to them. Option modules are clearly identified in Programme Regulations.

elective students may replace an option module with modules from another programme, subject to approval of Programme Directors, availability of places and timetable requirements.

Modules may also be designated as **pre-requisite** modules, meaning they must be taken and passed to allow for progression to a specified follow-up module.

Degree Classification

6. Postgraduate awards may be made with Merit or Distinction. Distinctions are normally awarded to students who achieve an average result of 70% or more, including a mark of 70 or over in their dissertation, for all level 7 modules on their programme. A Merit is normally awarded to students who achieve an average result of 60% or more, but less than 70% for all level 7 modules. Level 6 modules included as part of the programme are not included in the calculation for degree classification for postgraduate programmes.

Failure and Re-assessment of a Module

7. The Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study outline how an examination board should treat a failed module when considering progression and awards. However, each examination board is responsible for judging, within these regulations, whether a fail can be “compensated” (ie whether you can be awarded credit for that module even if you have not actually passed), whether you will need to re-take the module (see paragraph 8) or whether you will be able to attempt a re-assessment (see paragraph 9)

8. For any module on a postgraduate programme, if you fail to pass at the first attempt then any subsequent attempt will either be a “re-take” or a “re-assessment”. A re-take requires attendance at the module’s lectures and seminars as well as another attempt at the assessment, whereas “re-assessment” is where a student attempts only the failed element(s) of a failed module. The decision on whether you will be offered a re-take or re-assessment will be made by your sub-board of examiners.

9. A Sub-board of Examiners may offer an alternative form of assessment for failed elements as part of a re-assessment regime.

10. The timing of any re-assessment will be at the discretion of the Sub-board of Examiners; this will normally be either at the next normal assessment opportunity or in some instances before the beginning of the next academic year.

11. You will normally be offered two attempts at passing a module (the original attempt plus one further attempt which will either be a re-assessment or a re-take). After this, if the module has not been passed it will be classed either as a “compensated fail” (see 12) or a fail. In some cases this will mean that it will not be possible for you to gain the award that you have registered for; in such cases, your registration will normally be terminated.

12. If your module result is between 40 and 49% your Sub-board of Examiners may award a “compensated fail”. This will mean that you retain the module result, but are awarded credit for that module. An MA or MSc may be awarded to a student carrying no more than 30 credits as compensated fail. A core module may not be treated as a compensated fail; core modules must be passed in order to gain the award. The awards of MRes, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate do not normally permit the inclusion of compensated fail results in the calculation of classification

Common Award Scheme Policies

1. As part of the introduction of the Common Awards Scheme, the College has implemented a number of College-wide policies. The full policies can be seen at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules>
Some brief details on key policies are included here:

Late Submission of work for assessment

2. College policy dictates how Schools will treat work that is due for assessment but is submitted after the published deadline. Any work that is submitted for formal assessment after the published deadline is given two marks: a penalty mark of 50% for postgraduate students, assuming it is of a pass standard, and the 'real' mark that would have been awarded if the work had not been late. Both marks are given to the student on a cover sheet. If the work is not of a pass standard a single mark is given.
3. If you submit late work that is to be considered for assessment then you should provide written documentation, medical or otherwise, to explain why the work was submitted late. You will need to complete a standard pro-forma and submit it, with documentary evidence as appropriate, to your Tutor or Programme Director. The case will then be considered by the appropriate sub-board or delegated panel.
4. If no case is made then the penalty mark will stand. If the case is made and accepted then the examination board may allow the 'real' mark to stand.

Assessment Offences

5. The College Policy on Assessment Offences incorporates the College policy on plagiarism.
6. The policy describes two stages in the process for dealing with assessment offences (which include plagiarism, collusion, examination offences and other offences). The first stage allows for a formal school investigation into the alleged offence. Stage 2 involves a centrally convened panel for more serious offences, dealt with under the Code of Student Discipline.
7. The College treats all assessment offences seriously. It makes strenuous efforts to detect plagiarism, including using web-based software that can provide clear evidence. If you are in any doubt as to what constitutes acceptable conduct you should consult your personal tutor or another member of academic staff. The College has a wide range of sanctions that it may apply in cases of plagiarism, including the termination of a student's registration in the most serious cases.

Mitigating Circumstances

8. The College Policy on Mitigating Circumstances determines how Sub-boards of Examiners will treat assessment that has been affected by adverse circumstances. Mitigating Circumstances are defined as unforeseen, unpreventable circumstances that significantly disrupt your performance in assessment. This should not be confused with long term issues such as medical conditions, for which the College can make adjustments before assessment (for guidance on how arrangements can be made in these cases please see the College's Procedures for Dealing with Special Examination Arrangements).
9. A Mitigating Circumstances claim should be submitted if valid detrimental circumstances result in:
 - a) the late or non-submission of assessment;
 - b) non-attendance at examination(s);
 - c) poor performance in assessment.

10. For a claim to be accepted you must produce independent documentary evidence to show that the circumstances:

- a) have detrimentally affected your performance or will do so, with respect to 9a, 9b and 9c above;
- b) were unforeseen;
- c) were out of your control and could not have been prevented;
- d) relate directly to the timing of the assessment affected.

11 Documentation should be presented, wherever possible, on the official headed paper of the issuing body, and should normally include the dates of the period in which the circumstances applied. Copies of documentary evidence will not normally be accepted. If you need an original document for another purpose, you should bring the original into the Departmental Office so that a copy can be made by a member of College staff. (Where a photocopy is made by a member of staff they should indicate on the copy that they have seen the original).

12. Discussing your claim with a member of staff does not constitute a submission of a claim of mitigating circumstances.

13. You are encouraged to submit your claim for mitigating circumstances in advance and at the earliest opportunity. The final deadline for submission of a claim is *normally* 1 week after the final examination unless otherwise stated by your Department. Where possible, claims should be submitted using the standard College Mitigating Circumstances claim form (available from your Departmental office) which should be submitted in accordance with the procedure for submission published by your Department. Claims should always be supported by appropriate documentary evidence.

14. You should be aware that individual marks will almost never be changed in the light of mitigating circumstances. Assessment is designed to test your achievement rather than your potential; it is not normally possible to gauge what you would have achieved had mitigating circumstances not arisen. Where mitigating circumstances are accepted, and it is judged by an Sub-board of Examiners that these circumstances were sufficiently severe to have affected your performance in assessment the usual response will be to offer you another opportunity for assessment without penalty, at the next available opportunity.

15. Guidance on what may constitute acceptable mitigating circumstances is available as an appendix to the policy, available from <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules> or your Departmental office; you should note that this is not an exhaustive list, and that each case will be treated on its merits by the relevant sub-board or delegated body.

16. You should note that decisions on mitigating circumstances are the responsibility of the sub-board for your programme. Where you are taking an elective or other module offered by another department or school, any application for mitigating circumstances should be to your "home" department.

Break-in-Studies Policy

17. The Common Awards Scheme regulations allow you to suspend studies for a maximum of two years in total during your programme of study. This may be for one period of two years or for non-consecutive shorter periods (see 18) that add up to a total of two years or less.

18. Any break-in-studies on a postgraduate programme would normally be for a minimum of one year; breaks may also be permitted for a period of one or two terms, dependent on the structure of the programme.

19. Any application for a break-in-studies should be made in writing to your programme director or personal tutor. If you are applying for an approved break-in-studies, you should give details of the length of the proposed break and the reasons for the application.

20. You will not be liable for fees while on an approved break-in-studies. If you have attended for part of a term you will normally be liable for the fees due in that term, unless there are mitigating circumstances.

21. If you are on a break-in-studies you will not have access to the Library or ITS unless you make an application and pay the appropriate fee to use these facilities. Applications must be made directly to the Library and/or ITS.

22. If you do not re-enrol after having completed two years of break-in-studies you will be deemed to have withdrawn from your programme. If you wish to resume your programme after having been withdrawn, you will normally be required to re-apply for admission.

Other Policies

22. In addition to the policies above, other College academic-related policies include:

- Accredited Prior Learning
- Termination of Registration
- Procedures for Dealing with Special Examination Arrangements
- Suspension of Regulations
- The Operation of Boards and Sub-Boards of Examiners
- The Role of External & Intercollegiate Examiners
- Marking and Moderation
- Feedback on Assessment

To see these policies, please see the Common Awards Scheme website:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules>

23. The College also operates a Procedure for Appeals Against Decisions of Boards of Examiners; this is also available from this website.

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