MSc in Learning Technologies

COURSE ARRANGEMENTS
For October 2014 Entry
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Overview of the MSc in Learning Technologies Programme

Programme Directors: Alex Poulavassilis (ap@dcs.bbk.ac.uk) & Kaska Porayska-Pomsta (K.Porayska-Pomsta@ioe.ac.uk)
Admissions Tutors: Alex Poulavassilis (ap@dcs.bbk.ac.uk) & Sergio Gutierrez-Santos (sergut@dcs.bbk.ac.uk)
Programme Administrator: Liam Simmonds (pgadmin@dcs.bbk.ac.uk)
IoE Prog. Administrator: Suzanna Jerrard/Kate Sym (ma.ict@ioe.ac.uk)

This programme provides academic grounding for the profession of Learning Technologist. 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 design, develop and evaluate learning technologies from the perspective of state-of-the-art AI and computer science techniques, learning theory, and teaching practice. It focuses on issues in the design of learning technologies, the relationships between pedagogy and technology, and practical aspects of developing and evaluating learning systems.

What makes this MSc distinctive is its twin focus on both the computer science and the learning theory that together underpin the optimal development of learning technologies. There is widespread use of learning technology now in many settings, 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 capabilities in their development of learning technologies often remain in research labs, not penetrating through to practice and large-scale implementation. This MSc, and the research of the London Knowledge Lab more generally, aims to address these issues.

The MSc in Learning Technologies is targeted towards:

a. those with a background in computing (or in another scientific, mathematical or engineering subject provided they are familiar with object-oriented programming and the fundamentals of computing), who wish to
   - move into a career in the development of learning technologies; or
   - increase their pedagogical and technical knowledge if they are already working in the learning technology or education sectors; or
   - undertake a one-year (or two years part-time) postgraduate degree, possibly with a view to then continuing on to an MPhil/PhD.

b. those without a background in computing, who wish to gain knowledge of both the computer science and the learning theory that underpin the development of learning technologies; such applicants may be required to demonstrate aptitude for programming prior to admission.
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
- plan, implement and report on a major software implementation-based project
- critique the use of technology from the perspective of learning theory and teaching practice
- assess the pedagogic potential of new digital technologies, testing educational theory, feeding back into theoretical issues relating to teaching, learning and communication
- 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 development of technologies for learning
- work and learn independently and collaboratively
- plan and work to deadlines

Full-time students take 120 credits of taught modules over one year and also 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. We encourage projects that are grounded in the context of students’ prior or current work experiences.

The project provides an opportunity for students to investigate an aspect of the subject that particularly interests them, enabling them to design and build a larger and more complex system than they encounter in the taught module coursework.
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:

- Learning and Teaching with Technologies (LTT) – 30 credits (core module)
- Research Methods in Learning Technologies (RMLT) – 30 credits (core module)
- Programming in Java (PiJ) – 30 credits (core module)
- Software Design and Programming (SDP) (formerly, Object-Oriented Design and Programming, OODP) – 15 credits (compulsory module)
- The Project – 60 credits (core module)
- 15 additional credits of optional modules selected from:
  - Component-Based Software Development (CBSD) – 15 credits
  - Internet and Web Technologies (IWT) – 15 credits

Students who are following Route B take the following modules:

- Learning and Teaching with Technologies (LTT) – 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:
  - Intelligent Technologies (IntTech) – 15 credits
  - Internet and Web Technologies (IWT) – 15 credits
  - Mobile and Ubiquitous Computing (MUC) – 15 credits
  - Software Design and Programming (SDP) (formerly, Object-Oriented Design and Programming, OODP) – 15 credits
  - Component-Based Software Development (CBSD) – 15 credits
  - Semantic Web (SW) – 15 credits
  - Search Engines and Web Navigation (SEWN) – 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. Optional modules will be offered only if there are sufficient numbers of students enrolled on them (typically, 10 or more).

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/](http://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**

**Induction evening for new students**

For both Part-timers and Full-timers: **6pm 23\textsuperscript{rd} September, Room 407, Malet Street**

This induction evening, which all new students must attend, will include an introduction to the MSc programme and a short hands-on introduction to the Department’s computer systems.

**Term dates**

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

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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Mon 5 Jan. 2015</td>
<td>Fri 20 Mar. 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Mon 20 Apr. 2015</td>
<td>Fri 3 July 2015</td>
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</table>

Lectures begin on Monday 29\textsuperscript{th} September in the Autumn term, and on Monday 5\textsuperscript{th} 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, 2014/15

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

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<th>Day</th>
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<td>Module</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>PiJ</td>
<td>1.30-5pm</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>RMLT*</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>IntTech</td>
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*LTT does not have a lecture every week – the dates will be notified to students by the lecturer during the first lecture, which will be on 8th October 2014. RMLT is taught over two terms; it does not have a lecture every week – the dates will be notified to students by the lecturer during the first lecture, which will be on 7th October 2014.

KEY

- Learning and Teaching with Technologies (LTT) – 30 credits
- Research Methods in Learning Technologies (RMLT) – 30 credits
- Programming in Java (PiJ) – 30 credits
- Software Design and Programming (SDP) – 15 credits
- Component-Based Software Development (CBSD) – 15 credits
- Intelligent Technologies (IntTech) – 15 credits
- Internet and Web Technologies (IWT) – 15 credits
- Mobile and Ubiquitous Computing (MUC) – 15 credits
- Semantic Web (SW) – 15 credits
- Search Engines and Web Navigation (SEWN) – 15 credits
Part-time Year 1 Timetable, 2014/15

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

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<th>Provisional Part-time Year 1 timetable 2014/15</th>
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*LTT does not have a lecture every week – the dates will be notified to students by the lecturer during the first lecture, which will be on 8th October. RMLT is taught over two terms; it does not have a lecture every week – the dates will be notified to students by the lecturer during the first lecture, which will be on 7th October 2014.

Part-time Year 2 Timetable, 2015/16

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

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KEY

- Learning and Teaching with Technologies (LTT) – 30 credits
- Research Methods in Learning Technologies (RMLT) – 30 credits
- Programming in Java (PiJ) – 30 credits
- Software Design and Programming (SDP) – 15 credits
- Component-Based Software Development (CBSD) – 15 credits
- Intelligent Technologies (IntTech) – 15 credits
- Internet and Web Technologies (IWT) – 15 credits
- Mobile and Ubiquitous Computing (MUC) – 15 credits
- Semantic Web (SW) – 15 credits
- Search Engines and Web Navigation (SEWN) – 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, 2014/15

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## Part-time Year 1 Timetable, 2014/15

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## Part-time Year 2 Timetable, 2015/2016

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Syllabus, reading lists and independent work

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

Independent study is a key learning objective of the programme. Most 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 will be required to confirm 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.

Students can contact lecturers outside the classroom to discuss the material introduced in each module. They can meet lecturers during scheduled ‘office hours’ or can contact them via email 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.
Information about the Taught Modules

(please see http://www.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/courses/msclt/outline.php for further details about each of the taught modules)

**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 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.

**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 specific to developing learning technology applications, and a critical review of the related literature. It also aims to familiarise students with areas of research into learning technologies at the London Knowledge Lab, including intelligent system design, knowledge representation, learner modelling and learning analytics.

**Programming in Java**
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. This module is compulsory for Route A applicants, i.e those without significant prior experience of computing. Compulsory pre-course reading: please work through the “Introduction to Computer Programming” notes at www.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/courses/msclt/entry.php

**Software design and programming**
This module covers software development in more depth than PiJ, including design of object-oriented software using proven methodologies and tools, programming in object-oriented and functional styles, and detailed examination of Software Design Patterns. Students will become familiar with key aspects of OO software design and programming, such as modularity and maintainability. The emphasis will be on when and why these aspects are important.
Component-based software development
This module covers the design and implementation of software systems from components, which is often necessary for large-scale, distributed software development, and follows on from the PiJ and SDP modules. It discusses the development of web services through standards such as XML, SOAP, WSDL, UDDI, and the use of web services in Service Oriented Architectures (SOA). It introduces n-tier architectures, message-oriented middleware, and Cloud Computing.

Intelligent Technologies
This module covers methods for intelligent information management, decision making and complex problem solving. It provides an introduction to technologies such as knowledge-based systems, artificial neural networks, fuzzy logic, evolutionary computation and hybrid systems, showing how such technologies work to support the development of modern intelligent applications, such as personalised systems. The module explains the fundamental aspects, illustrates what each technology is useful for, how to choose the right technology for a given setting, and how systems that employ these technologies are designed and built. Intelligent technologies have application in personalised learning environments by enabling adaptation to individuals or groups on the basis of their skills, aptitudes, knowledge levels and preferences.

Mobile and Ubiquitous Computing
This module focuses on the challenges of designing and developing software on mobile platforms, and the novel aspects of mobile, ubiquitous and pervasive computing. It discusses processing streams of sensor data, location sensing technologies, RFID and the Internet of Things (IoT). The practical lab sessions cover Android programming for mobile phones.

Internet and Web Technologies
This module aims to provide students with an understanding of the Internet and how information is presented and manipulated on the World Wide Web. It covers Web languages such as HTML, XHTML, XML, DTDs, XPath and XSLT, client-side information processing (e.g. using Javascript), server-side information processing, as well as the network protocols of the Internet itself.

Search Engines and Web Navigation
This module covers the technologies that underpin search and navigation of information on the World Wide Web. Also covered are Recommender Systems and Collaborative Filtering. There are a number of practical lab sessions covering aspects such as designing and implementing web pages, ranking of search engine query results, crawling the web, mining web server logs, and RSS.

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. Please note: The part of this module that covers Reasoning with Ontologies requires students to feel confident with using mathematical notations.
Information about the Project

Each student on the MSc in Learning Technologies will undertake an individual project of their own devising, supervised by a member of academic staff from the London Knowledge Lab. The project will comprise the design and development of a substantial software system targeted at a specific learning setting. The project will need to show also an appreciation and knowledge of the pedagogical aspects of the learning setting being targeted.

Each project has a primary supervisor whose expertise best matches the primary focus of the project. Each project also has a secondary supervisor with complementary expertise. Students are encouraged to come up with their own ideas for projects, and to arrange their own evaluation studies with appropriate groups of users. We encourage projects that are grounded in the context of students’ prior or current work experiences.

In order to arrange supervision for their project, a student should discuss their ideas with the Project Tutor, 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 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 consolidate and develop their specialist knowledge of designing technological solutions that are specific to the activity of learning. They will also be able to develop 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: Sergio Gutierrez-Santos. Primary and secondary supervisor.

Assessment: Written project report of 8,000-12,000 words, inclusive of the Bibliography; plus related technical Appendices. Working software system targeted at a specific learning setting.

Reading: As recommended by the supervisors

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1 Anyone working in a school must supply a form from the Criminal Records Bureau, which tracks criminal records.
Enrolment on the MSc and on the modules

Birkbeck Registry will send you information, by email, about how to enrol on the MSc in Learning Technologies programme.

You will also need to enrol with Birkbeck for all the optional modules that you will be taking (enrolment on core and compulsory modules is done automatically, following your enrolment on the programme). The Programme Administrator at Birkbeck will email you a Module Choice form for you to complete within the first two weeks of attendance. You need to complete this form and email it to the two Programme Directors, who will then authorise it. Once it has been authorised, you will be added to the list of students attending each module, which will give you access to the module materials on Birkbeck’s VLE.

In addition, you will need to complete a Module Choice form that will be sent to you from the Institute of Education, soon after your enrolment on the MSc programme, in order to enrol onto the LTT module (which is administered by the Institute of Education). Please return this form to the IoE Programme Administrator. You will then be invited to attend an enrolment session at the IoE, which you must do. Please note that the cost of the LTT module is included in your registration fee for the MSc in Learning Technologies, and you should not be asked to pay any additional amount in order to enrol on it.
Obligations of Overseas Students

Overseas students must notify the Programme Directors and the Programme Administrator of their intention to:

- withdraw from the programme
- return to their country of origin (either temporarily or permanently)
- to take a holiday

The department will then ensure that the Registry is notified without delay. Records will be kept of all approved holidays and breaks and students must ensure that they notify the Programme Administrator on their return so they can be checked back in.

Students must report any permanent withdrawal from a programme to the Programme Directors and the Programme Administrator, which Birkbeck will then report to the UK Border Agency (UKBA) immediately.

Any intention or approval to change programme or change of programme or study period must be reported to the Programme Administrator, who will then inform the Registry immediately.

**Failure to comply could lead to your visa being revoked.**
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 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 LTT, RMLT and PiJ (if taken) 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 LTT, RMLT or PiJ) 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, 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: RMLT, LTT and the Project. There will be a 2-hour written exam in the rest of the modules, with a coursework component in most of these as well. 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.

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](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. 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](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” 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:


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


When you are referring to a journal article:


When you are referring to a webpage:


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 College’s 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 cooperation. 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, Aidan Smith, directly. Telephone: 020 7631 6062. Email am.smith@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: info@bscu.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: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/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 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 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
- 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITS Helpdesk Opening Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ground Floor, Malet Street Main Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term time: Monday to Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacations: Monday to Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel: 020 7631 6543</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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:

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

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” (i.e., 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 a 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

23. 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](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules)

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

May 2011