

Genealogical Studies Programmes at the University of Strathclyde

One year full time MSc in Genealogical, Palaeographic and Heraldic Studies FAQ

Background

Since 2005/6, the University of Strathclyde has run the highly successful Professional Postgraduate Programme in Genealogical, Palaeographic and Heraldic Studies. To date, over 400 students have completed or are currently enrolled in the various stages of the Programme, a number of these based overseas.

The University offers a fully online (distance learning) full time Masters (MSc) in Genealogical, Palaeographic and Heraldic Studies running over one academic year, including holidays, which starts in September.

The Programme also operates a part-time version of this course, also fully online (distance learning) with each of the three tiers running over one academic year:

- Year 1 - PgCertificate by coursework
- Year 2 - PgDiploma by coursework plus final project
- Year 3 - Master's degree (MSc) by dissertation

There is more information on the Programme at:

<http://www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/centreforlifelonglearning/>

FAQs

1. What level is this course?

This course is at Postgraduate level (SCQF Level 11, SVQ Level 5), the same as any Postgraduate Masters degree. For comparison, a Bachelors degree is Level 9, a Masters degree is Level 11 and a Doctoral degree is Level 12. For more detail on these levels, see the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels webpage at: <http://scqf.org.uk/the-framework/scqf-levels/>

2. Why is this an MSc, not an MA?

In Scotland, an MA is an undergraduate degree. This course is postgraduate-level.

3. What areas and topics does this course cover?

Sources from across the world are covered but there **is** an emphasis on research within the British Isles.

- The first term is designed to give both breadth and depth of knowledge of and experience with using English/Welsh and Scottish records and research techniques; an introduction to

genetic genealogy, heraldry, Latin for genealogists and consideration of issues surrounding professional practice are also included.

- Term two covers record sources from around the world (Irish records in depth, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, British Empire and European). There are also sessions on genetic genealogy, palaeography and heraldry. Opportunity is given to specialise through various research exercises which give students choice in a topic and/or area of focus.
- Term three is largely spent writing the Masters Dissertation

4. What are the entry requirements?

Candidates for the full time MSc will normally hold an undergraduate degree, though other forms of qualification and experience will be taken into account. First degrees may also be augmented by previous postgraduate qualifications, such as an MSc. Some experience in genealogical (or other relevant) research is required and we may ask to see examples of reports and/or charts you have created.

Overseas applicants should be native English speakers, or have IELTS 6.5 overall with no individual component below 5.5. There is further guidance on this at

<http://www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/englishlanguage/requirements/>

5. How much study time is required?

The course will involve a considerable time commitment, in the region of 35-40 hours per week, to cover reading, participation in online discussion forums, research and the completion of course work. There is also a requirement to take part in online weekly tutorial sessions and these will usually take place on a Friday except when the University is closed for holiday; on these days, the tutorials will take place on the Thursday of that week. One to one tutorials may also be scheduled for other days based on the agreement of the tutor and student.

6. What if I don't have a standard educational background?

Although these courses are at the Postgraduate level (SCQF Level 11, SVQ Level 5) they are not exclusively aimed at graduates with a standard undergraduate degree. Normally an undergraduate degree is required but non-standard educational or professional qualifications will be considered. Given the pace and study requirements of the full time course, we generally expect applicants to have an undergraduate degree; the part time course may be better suited to those without this experience. However, we will consider other qualifications and experience.

7. What software and IT provision/experience do I need?

Intending students need to be technically competent with standard IT software such as Microsoft Word and Excel, have fast internet access available and be comfortable with online interaction. The course materials support Windows based software and the use of family tree software is required. The preferred family tree software for the course is FamilyTreeMaker for Windows (the use of other packages is allowed by students). Students have successfully completed the course using Macs but we cannot provide IT support in these cases.

8. Are there preparatory courses I could do first?

Strathclyde offers a range of beginning to intermediate courses aimed at preparing those with little or no genealogical experience. These can be taken on campus and online – for more information see: <http://www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/centreforlifelonglearning/>

9. Can I transfer in credits?

Students who already hold the PgCert or PgDip in Genealogical, Palaeographic and Heraldic Studies from Strathclyde, or certain other relevant qualifications from specified institutions, will be able to transfer credits, up to a defined limit. However, no fee discounts will be available. If your qualifications are more than five years old, we may require you to re-take certain parts of the curriculum.

10. Who runs this course?

The Genealogical Studies team within the Centre for Lifelong Learning (CLL) has years of experience in delivering courses at this level. A number of the tutor team contributes with outside experts providing advice and support as required. Organisationally, the course runs within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) at the University of Strathclyde.

11. What is the timetable?

The content will be equivalent to the existing postgraduate courses, *viz.*:

- Term 1 – PgCert content (September – December; 12 weeks)
- Term 2 – PgDip content (January – April; 13 weeks, plus Easter week)
- Term 3 – MSc dissertation (April – July; 16 weeks)

(These dates may be subject to change).

- Term 1 –
 - All class materials will be released on a Monday (Tuesday if the Monday is an official holiday in Scotland), weekly over 12 weeks.
 - Assignments and Assessments typically will be due in the Monday following the relevant tutorial.
 - There will be a number of online mandatory tutorials each Friday (Thursday if the Friday is an official holiday in Scotland) which will touch on items of interest arising from the week's topics and deal with general and Assignment issues – these may range from one-two hours. Further individual or group tutorials, typically 15-30 minutes each, may be added as required by the tutor or requested by the students.
 - There will be further one-to-one contact throughout the week, based on Assignment and Assessment returns and feedback. There will be additional and frequent on-line contact as needed via email and forum discussions.
- Term 2 – as Term 1 above, except that class materials are released and Assignments and Assessments are due to be returned on a two-week schedule. There will still be a tutorial day, as above, though this is moved to every two weeks for most of the term.
- Term 3 – as this is more about individual research, most contact will be one-to-one and regular tutor/student online meetings will be scheduled. But there will be all-together tutorial slots, on Fridays as before (though not every week). This will ease any feeling of isolation and reinforce the collegial aspect of the course.

Of course, students may contact their tutor (and each other) at additional times, and dialogue and use of the class forums is encouraged.

There will be optional visits to archives and libraries built into the academic year.

All of our postgraduate students are eligible to take part in Strathclyde's Researcher Development Programme (RDP) which offers a range of courses, workshops, events, tools and resources to support personal and professional career development beyond the specific discipline area. There

are plans to provide this online. See more at:

<https://www.strath.ac.uk/theresearcherdevelopmentprogramme/>

12. What are the fees?

For the 2018-19 academic year:

- Home students (Scotland, UK and EU) – £8,350.
- International (non-EU) – £8,350.

13. Is there any help with fees, or any grants?

Please consult <http://www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/scholarships/> . Also consult your local Education Authority or equivalent.

- The full time MSc is eligible for **UK wide** Professional and Career Development Loans, see: <https://www.gov.uk/career-development-loans/overview> .
- The full time MSc is eligible for student loans through Student Finance England for students resident in **England** – see <https://www.gov.uk/postgraduate-loan/overview> for details.
- **Northern Irish** students can find information on postgraduate funding at: <http://www.studentfinancenir.co.uk> .
- **Welsh** students can find information on postgraduate funding at: <http://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/>
- The **Scottish** Awards Agency Scotland has announced that eligible online postgraduate courses from 2018-19 will be eligible for student loan funding. Details are not known as yet, please check with <http://www.saas.gov.uk/index.htm> for updates.

14. Is there a deadline for applying?

Applications should be submitted by mid-August. This will allow sufficient time for the application to be processed, the offer to be accepted by you and payment to clear, before the course starts. Early application is advised as numbers may be limited on the course. (Applications submitted after mid-August may be considered if there are still available places on the course.) As we send out a copy of the preferred genealogy software and our step-by-step guides roughly a month before the course begins, early application is also advised to receive these in good time.

15. What should I do next?

There is more information on applying for postgraduate taught courses and the process of application at www.strath.ac.uk/admissions/postgraduate/taught/.

For further information and/or to register your interest in the one year full time MSc, please contact our Programme Administrators, Jane MacKenzie or Jennifer Campbell.

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