



## Contact us

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If you have any questions about courses, applications or student life at Bristol, please contact the Enquiries Team.

### Photography

Paul Box/Upfest, Nick Smith

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# History of Art



Undergraduate study



# Courses

## Single Honours

**BA History of Art**  
three years V350

## Joint Honours

**BA History of Art and French**  
four years VR31

**BA History of Art and German**  
four years VR32

**BA History of Art and Italian**  
four years VR33

**BA History of Art and Portuguese**  
four years VR35

**BA History of Art and Russian**  
four years VR37

**BA History of Art and Spanish**  
four years VR34

This leaflet contains information for students planning to start university in autumn 2020. We have made every effort to ensure all details are correct at the time of going to press (May 2019). However, since this information is subject to change, you are advised to check the University's website, [bristol.ac.uk/ug-study](http://bristol.ac.uk/ug-study), for the latest updates.

# Why study history of art at Bristol?

The act of making art is one of humanity's most universal activities. Art history provides a way of understanding the past and considering its relationship to the present. Art history at Bristol explores painting, sculpture and drawing as well as photography, film, multimedia and architecture. It involves anything that can be called 'visual culture' – all the ways in which a culture depicts itself, from matchbox designs to adverts, public sculpture to graffiti. We offer an interdisciplinary approach, exploring relationships between art and music, art and writing, the visual culture of sport and more.

The Department of History of Art has an unrivalled reputation for expertise across a broad spectrum of research strengths, from the medieval to the contemporary. Few departments of its size can boast such comprehensive coverage. The units we offer draw directly on the research interests and published work of our staff, which means you will get to study emerging contemporary theories in art history from experts in their field.

Bristol is famous for its rich cultural heritage, and we are proud to work with Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, M Shed, the Royal West of England Academy and Bath's Holburne Museum. National collaborations include those with the Tate Galleries, National Museum Wales, and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Besides the core focus on art history, you will have the opportunity during your time here to contextualise your studies by taking options beyond your department. You may choose to take units in related or broader subject areas or in a foreign language. You will also take part in the Bristol Futures programme, which builds knowledge and experience in the fields of innovation and enterprise, global citizenship and sustainable development.

Joint honours students spend a year abroad, and single honours students may also choose to spend one semester living and studying abroad, an experience which broadens horizons and which employers value highly.

'What I like most about the history of art course is that you're given a solid foundation of understanding but allowed a wide scope for pursuing your individual research interests, so the course stays as fresh as you want it to be. I have also found the skills and knowledge that I have developed useful and highly applicable to my life outside of the University.'

Milo (BA History of Art)

## What will you study?

Teaching and learning in history of art at Bristol are geared to an education at the forefront of the subject, closely integrated with the acquisition of the key skills and attributes sought by employers for a wide range of careers. Our diverse range of assessments ensures that you gain a thorough training in advanced research, source analysis, and sharing your findings in a number of ways.

We ensure that you graduate with experience in formal writing and presentation skills, and in using digital formats and other media to present knowledge, ideas and arguments. You will be experienced in working individually and in groups, and in making connections with and communicating to audiences beyond the University.

Our undergraduate courses focus on, but are not exclusive to, western art and architecture, providing you with a broad knowledge of developments from medieval to modern times. We will help you to progress steadily from your first year of study right through the degree, preparing you to undertake a piece of original research for your final-year dissertation.

The first year provides a solid foundation in visual and textual analysis and interpretation – key skills needed for a history of art degree – through the study of medieval, early modern, modern and contemporary art history. You will choose a research-oriented, small-group seminar class on topics such as representing and shaping landscapes, urban visual cultures, and artistic identities. In the following years you will choose from a variety of broader thematic lecture- and seminar-based units, as well as further research-oriented units. A special feature of the degree at Bristol is that you will undertake one substantial piece of independent research each year, as well as writing a dissertation in your final year.

You will be assessed through essays, visual analysis, dissertations, and individual and group presentations and projects (which include virtual and physical exhibitions), as well as written exams at the end of each teaching block in January and the summer.

We offer a wide range of topics. Our current units include:

- Arts of War and Peace
- Early Italian Art
- Modern Art in Britain
- Art and Music (1800-1950)
- German Expressionism
- Sculpture and the Body
- Weimar Women
- Caravaggio
- Art and Internationalism
- Baroque Art
- Physical Culture – Visual Culture
- Race and Place
- The Culture of Fashion 1700-1900
- Religious Art
- Approaches to Cubism
- Realism in 19th-Century French and British Art
- Eisenstein and Cinema in the Soviet Union.

You can also study history of art with a modern language at Bristol. We currently offer joint honours degrees with French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian or Spanish. These are four-year degrees in which your time is divided equally between history of art and your chosen language. The third year is spent in a country appropriate to your chosen language, and while it is largely devoted to developing your linguistic skills, you will also research a topic in art history related to your location in preparation for writing a dissertation in the final year.

There is also a Study Abroad unit that constitutes a single teaching block for single honours degrees. Students choose units offered by our exchange partners which are compatible with those normally studied in the second year of our single honours degrees. This opportunity allows you to advance your knowledge of art history in the context of a different higher education system.

The Department of History of Art is based in the Woodland Road complex, a series of converted Victorian villas at the heart of our Clifton campus.



'I liked how you were encouraged to do your own research from an early stage. Throughout my degree, we increasingly looked at really interesting forms of culture, such as film, photography and cartoons.'

Emily (BA History of Art)

## Careers and graduate destinations

The skills that arts students traditionally bring to the workplace are now, more than ever, valued in every part of the employment market. Our students go on to succeed in careers as diverse as the subjects they study here – commerce, tech start-ups, law, accountancy, theatre, museums, publishing, the charity sector, journalism, politics, education and international relations, to name just a few. Our graduates also go on to work in sectors perhaps not immediately associated with arts disciplines, such as engineering and IT.

To ensure arts graduates continue to be appealing to employers, the Bristol Skills Framework enables students to recognise their development in areas such as academic writing, problem solving, group work, and individual and group presenting. We will equip you with the tools to market your skills, your achievement and your potential in whatever career path you choose to pursue after you graduate.

Bristol history of art graduates have an excellent track record of employment and are much sought after, finding employment in museums and art galleries, art and antique businesses, publishing, arts administration, heritage organisations,

teaching and related fields. Some go into roles in management and administration, the media and financial sectors, advertising, public relations and consultancy, where their skills in analysis and communication are valued highly.

Many go on to further study, joining the postgraduate community at the University of Bristol or elsewhere. Recent graduates have found employment with Sotheby's and Christies (London and Paris), the Guggenheim (Venice), Phaidon Press, the National Portrait Gallery (London), the Holburne (Bath) and the V&A (London), and as part of the Prime Minister's Office and Jamie Oliver's Public Relations team.

### Bristol is the second most targeted university by top UK employers.

High Fliers Research 2019



#### Graduate employers

RWA  
Karla Otto  
Boden  
Rose Uniacke Ltd  
Artist studio



#### Career destinations

Events Assistant  
Exhibition Coordinator  
Digital Marketing Assistant  
Account Assistant  
Front of House

Source: Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey 2016/17. Find out more at [bristol.ac.uk/careers/be-inspired](http://bristol.ac.uk/careers/be-inspired).

## Making your application

Visit [bristol.ac.uk/ug20-arthistory](http://bristol.ac.uk/ug20-arthistory) for more information about our courses.

#### Typical offer for BA History of Art

**A-levels** AAB (contextual BBB).

**IB Diploma** 34 points overall (contextual 31) with 17 at Higher Level (contextual 15).

Our contextual offer is a grade reduction of up to two grades below the standard entry requirements, made to applicants from under-represented groups. Find out more at [bristol.ac.uk/contextual-offers](http://bristol.ac.uk/contextual-offers).

**GCSEs** No specific subjects required.

**Selection process** UCAS.

For other accepted qualifications, and for our English language requirements, visit [bristol.ac.uk/ug20-arthistory](http://bristol.ac.uk/ug20-arthistory).

#### Application guidance for history of art courses

Generally, selection is based on your UCAS application, but we may interview mature students or students with non-traditional qualifications.

If you are currently a student at a UK university or higher education college and wish to transfer to Bristol, you must apply through UCAS.

#### Further information

Find out more about the Department of History of Art: [bristol.ac.uk/arthistory](http://bristol.ac.uk/arthistory).

This information is correct at the time of printing (May 2019), but we recommend you check the University website for the latest information: [bristol.ac.uk/ug20-arthistory](http://bristol.ac.uk/ug20-arthistory).



Read more about how we support you when you are here:

[bristol.ac.uk/students](http://bristol.ac.uk/students)