

Programme Specification: MRes Archaeology

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/pg/archaeology-mres/>

Table A: Programme Specification

Catalogue	Programme Details
Academic Year	2025-2026
Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	Degree of Master of Science by Research (MRes) [FHEQ Level 7]
Variants	Full-time (1 year) / Part-time (2 years)
Degree Awarding Body	University of Bradford
Faculty	Management, Sciences and Engineering
External Frameworks/ Reference Points	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (QAA 2014)

Please note: This programme specification has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate at the time of publication, but changes may occur given the interval between publishing and commencement of teaching. Any change which impacts the terms and conditions of an applicant's offer will be communicated to them. Upon commencement of the programme, students will receive further detail about their course and any minor changes will be discussed and/or communicated at this point.

Programme Aims

There is a shortage of highly skilled specialists in the archaeology and heritage industries, particularly in the use of new technologies. This programme will provide you with the skills necessary to engage a range of different and new audiences with applications that centre around heritage and archaeology. The course framework merges the benefits of specialised training in technical and methodological domains with a deep dive into specific thematic, period-focused, or region-based archaeology. It offers the flexibility to explore personal research interests thoroughly.

The programme will develop your research proficiency, cultivate innovation and originality, and promote scholarly excellence. It will enhance your analytical and problem-solving abilities, foster autonomy and creativity in professional practice, and promote lifelong learning and skills enhancement. It will encourage initiative and personal accountability, preparing you for leadership in uncertain environments.

The University of Bradford has, for over 50 years, been at the forefront of archaeological development, from the establishment of the world's first course in archaeological science, to the pioneering and development of geophysical prospection as a fundamental activity, and more recently the exploitation of digital technology and the online opportunities to reconstruct, visualise and interpret heritage in new ways and to engage an ever-wider public, including as partner citizen scientists. We were awarded a 2021 Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education

for our world-leading work in developing archaeological technology and techniques and our influence on practice, policy and society. The school has since benefited from over £3 million investment from the Arts and Humanities Research Council to build analytical capacity with drones, object and landscape scanners, CT and micro-CT, a range of cutting-edge geophysical equipment, isotope analysis and organic/inorganic chemical analysis.

The programme is intended for individuals who have a specific interest in developing as a researcher in key areas within heritage and archaeology. It is suited to those wishing to continue academic development outside of the framework of a rigid taught masters degree programme. Through this qualification you will gain considerable intensive research experience. As a graduate from the programme, you will be distinguishable from BA and BSc graduates with the higher-level qualification this programme provides, and a more competitive profile for funded doctoral programmes than MSc/MA graduates. Outside of academia graduates will be well placed for careers in archaeological consultancy or heritage management.

In summary, the programme is intended to:

- A1 Enable students to develop a systematic understanding and critical awareness of key and specialised research skills, practical methodologies and field or laboratory techniques for research in archaeological sciences.
- A2 Develop an ability to collate scientific information and critically appraise scientific data and research methodology.
- A3 Give students an advanced knowledge of principles underpinning their field of specialism.
- A4 Develop skills in scientific communication, research design and scientific methods.
- A5 Develop students' ability in a range of personal, transferable and key skills.
- A6 Enable students to think critically and to further develop as autonomous and lifelong learners.
- A7 Enable students to develop as advanced experimental researchers in their field of specialism within archaeological sciences.
- A8 Provide a supportive educational environment which meets the needs of students from a variety of backgrounds.

Programme learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this programme you will be able to demonstrate achievement of the following learning outcomes:

Subject Knowledge and Skills

1. Evaluate and synthesise knowledge within the discipline, demonstrating a critical understanding of current problems in archaeological and heritage sciences, grounded in the forefront of academic and professional practice.
2. Analyse and apply a broad range of research techniques relevant to archaeology and heritage studies, demonstrating comprehensive understanding and advanced scholarship.

3. Create and implement innovative solutions using established research methods and enquiry techniques, demonstrating originality in interpreting knowledge within archaeology and a practical understanding of its application.
4. Critically evaluate and synthesise current research and advanced scholarship in archaeology, demonstrating an ability to engage deeply with academic content and perspectives.
5. Critique and propose enhancements to existing methodologies within archaeological and heritage sciences, showing the ability to develop new hypotheses and innovative approaches to research and scholarship.

Practical and Transferable Skills

6. Analyse and solve complex issues both systematically and creatively, making informed judgements with incomplete data, and effectively communicate conclusions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.
7. Demonstrate independence and creativity in identifying and solving problems, acting autonomously in the planning and execution of tasks at a professional level.
8. Engage in continuous learning to enhance your knowledge and understanding and develop new professional skills to a high level.

Professional Behaviours

9. Demonstrate initiative and personal responsibility by independently making decisions and taking actions in various professional contexts.
10. Evaluate and make decisions in complex and unpredictable situations, utilising critical thinking and problem-solving skills to navigate challenges effectively.
11. Engage in self-directed learning to sustain professional development, demonstrating the ability to independently acquire new knowledge and skills.

Programme Structure

Aims/Outcomes

Through the MRes programme students will develop advanced research skills, demonstrated through the completion of a substantial research dissertation.

Structure/Modules

The MRes in Archaeology comprises a core 20-credit module in Professional Development, which provides a framework for the programme of study and covers key skills development.

Subject-specific content is provided through two 20-credit modules, selected based on subject interest in discussion with the programme leader and project supervisor.

The programme of study culminates with a 120-credit dissertation module allows the planning, execution and reporting of a substantial piece of independent research.

The programme can be studied either full-time or part-time.

Full-Time

Students choose two optional modules.

Level	Module Title	Selection	Credit	Study Period	Module Code
FHEQ 7	Professional Development	Core	20	Academic Year	ARC7041-B
FHEQ 7	Dissertation	Core	120	Full Year	ARC7055-G
FHEQ 7	Archaeometry	Option	20	Semester 2	ARC7035-B
FHEQ 7	Archaeological Prospection and Visualisation	Option	20	Semester 1	ARC7044-B
FHEQ 7	Nature of Matter and Instrumental Analysis	Option	20	Academic Year	ARC7045-B
FHEQ 7	Site Evaluation Strategies and GIS	Option	20	Semester 2	ARC7048-B

Part-Time

Year 1

Students choose one optional module in Year 1.

Level	Module Title	Selection	Credit	Study Period	Module Code
FHEQ 7	Professional Development	Core	20	Academic Year	ARC7041-B
FHEQ 7	Dissertation	Core	120	Full Year	ARC7055-G
FHEQ 7	Archaeometry	Option	20	Semester 2	ARC7035-B
FHEQ 7	Archaeological Prospection and Visualisation	Option	20	Semester 1	ARC7044-B
FHEQ 7	Nature of Matter and Instrumental Analysis	Option	20	Academic Year	ARC7045-B
FHEQ 7	Site Evaluation Strategies and GIS	Option	20	Semester 2	ARC7048-B

Year 2

Students choose one optional module in Year 2 that they have not studied previously.

Level	Module Title	Selection	Credit	Study Period	Module Code
FHEQ 7	Dissertation (continued from Year 1)	Core	120	Full Year	ARC7055-G
FHEQ 7	Archaeometry	Option	20	Semester 2	ARC7035-B
FHEQ 7	Archaeological Prospection and Visualisation	Option	20	Semester 1	ARC7044-B
FHEQ 7	Nature of Matter and Instrumental Analysis	Option	20	Academic Year	ARC7045-B
FHEQ 7	Site Evaluation Strategies and GIS	Option	20	Semester 2	ARC7048-B

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

A wide variety of teaching methods appropriate to the learning outcomes of the individual modules are employed throughout the programme, including:

- Formal lectures from research/teaching staff

- Lectures from visiting scientists and industrial researchers
- Small-group workshops and discussions with peers
- Practical sessions
- Journal clubs
- Group and one-to-one tutorials
- A large component of individual research

These are supported by material provided on Canvas (the University's virtual learning environment). Students will also attend the School's research seminar series.

Self-directed independent learning forms a significant component at MRes level; students will be supported to develop the attributes and skills needed for life-long learning and continued professional development. Directed private study will involve students in a variety of activities, which include directed reading of selected texts and specified source literature, report writing (technical and lay), preparing presentations (oral and poster) to deliver to peers, and other assignments. Practical elements include supervised and unsupervised use of research equipment in lab and field settings where this fits with the learning objectives and the student's identified pathway.

Coursework (laboratory and field reports, worksheets, essays) is geared towards demonstrating relevant knowledge, understanding and professional skills in principal approaches to the application and use of scientific methods in archaeology. Elements of group work are part of core specialist modules; communication skills are tested in both written and oral form in several modules. The degree progresses through a spiral curriculum, with each teaching/assessment block developing and building on prior learning. Summative work is split in the majority of modules to allow feedback to support student learning and growth. The underlying knowledge and understanding is then drawn upon in the Dissertation (c.24000 words) which encompasses a substantial piece of original research, ultimately assessed for its publishable merit.

Regulations

This programme follows the Assessment, Continuation and Award regulations published on the University's website (<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/about/legal-and-governance/governance/regulations/>) for postgraduate taught courses (Regulation 9)

Admissions requirements

We welcome applications from all potential students and most important in the decision to offer a place is our assessment of your potential to benefit from your studies and of your ability to succeed on this particular programme. Consideration of applications will be based on a combination of formal academic qualifications and other relevant experience.

The standard entry requirements for the programme are:

A first degree in Archaeology or another relevant discipline, normally with a second-class degree or higher or equivalent for UK students.

Admission will be judged on an individual basis for overseas students, at an equivalent level to UK entry requirements.

For North American students normally a GPA of at least 2.5 on a scale of 4.0 is required, or an equivalent.

Admissions are made on the basis of demonstrated ability, qualifications, experience, references, and, occasionally, interviews.

We would expect applicants to have an outline research proposal that they can discuss as part of the admissions process.

Recognition of Prior Learning

If you have prior certificated learning or professional experience which may be equivalent to parts of this programme, the University has procedures to evaluate and recognise this learning in order to provide applicants with exemptions from specified modules or parts of the programme.

English language requirements

If English is not your first language you must have IELTS at 6.0 or the equivalent, with no less than 5.5 in each sub test.

If you do not meet the IELTS requirement, and you have a UKVI approved IELTS, you can take a University of Bradford pre-sessional English course. See the Language Centre for more details. For further information on English Language requirements please see the dedicated international entry requirements webpage.

Information in this document is for the contemporary recruitment cycle and was accurate at time of publication. The current tariff and accepted qualifications for entry onto the programme is published at the online course page: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/pg/archaeology-mres/>

The University has a set of terms and conditions for all students accepting an offer to study on a course here at Bradford. This is called the Student Contract. This document sets out the Terms and Conditions which apply when you accept an offer of a place on a programme of study at the University of Bradford. View our Student Contract for further details:
<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/student-contract/>