

Revised undergraduate programme specification

School of Oriental and African Studies

The following information forms the programme specification at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. It gives definitive information relating to a programme of study and is written for a public audience, particularly prospective and current students. It is also used for other purposes such as initial programme approval, and is therefore produced at the start of the programme development process. Once approved, it forms the baseline information for all statements relating to the programme and is updated as approved amendments are made.

CORE INFORMATION

Programme title	BA South Asian Studies (3 years)
Final award	BA Honours
Intermediate awards	Certificate in South Asian Studies (after 1 year)
Mode of attendance	Full-time
UCAS code	
Professional body accreditation	N/A
Date specification created/updated	February 2016

WHY CHOOSE THIS PROGRAMME?

(This information will be used for marketing purposes as summary information about the programme for prospective students. It should be written accordingly, using brief, headline statements and bullet points. The first section is standard text for all programme specifications and should therefore not be amended: subsequent sections should be completed by individual authors.)

Why study at SOAS?	SOAS is unique as the only higher education institution in the UK specialising in the study of Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The School also has the largest concentration of specialist faculty concerned with the study of these areas at any university in the world. SOAS is consistently ranked among the top higher education institutions in the UK and the world and it also offers a friendly, vibrant environment for students in a diverse and close-knit community. Click here for more information.
What is special about this programme?	The three-year single-subject degree in South Asian Studies gives you the opportunity to study South Asia from the perspective of different disciplines (anthropology, art, cinema, history, literature, religion, politics, economics, law). We offer the widest range of culture

	<p>modules on South Asia, both at introductory and specialist levels.</p> <p>SOAS is the only University in the UK where you can study South Asian languages (Bengali, Hindi, Nepali, Sanskrit, Urdu) as part of your BA degree, and combine language learning with a broad range of modules related to the area. The 3-year single degree in South Asian Studies allows you to choose whether to pursue language study after Year 1 or not.</p> <p>In Hindi, Nepali, Sanskrit and Urdu ('pathway languages') we offer language modules at beginner, intermediate and advanced level, depending on your level of skills. We offer a more limited range of modules in Bengali, and single modules in Punjabi, Pali and Prakrit. Other modules will use the language that use the language skills you acquire to gain access to the present and past culture of South Asia through written and audio-visual texts.</p>
Who would it suit?	<p>Our BA South Asian Studies transforms your interest in South Asia into a serious degree, combining extensive knowledge in the area, opportunities for language study, and a host of much-valued transferrable skills.</p> <p>The career paths of our graduates include international development and aid agencies, print journalism and media, local, national and international government agencies, overseas companies, teaching, law, librarianship, arts administration.</p> <p>As the economies of South Asia continue to expand, a knowledge of language and culture will be more and more of an asset in the world of commerce and international trade.</p> <p>Many of our graduates choose to pursue Masters' programmes that either focus on particular aspects of South Asia, or are linked to professional qualifications in</p>

	law, development, media, etc.
Programme structure	<p>BA South Asian Studies as a 3-year single-subject degree gives students the opportunity to choose whether to pursue language learning after year 1 or to focus exclusively on culture modules related to South Asia. Students who decide to pursue language study more seriously and spend the third year abroad can transfer to the BA South Asian Studies 4-year degree.</p> <p>The first year features the core module South Asian Culture, a modular course which surveys the cultural history of South Asia. This is taken alongside a language module, an introductory modules on the history, art, religion and law of South Asia taught in other departments, and another such module or a module in another subject ('open option').</p> <p>Year 2 offers the option of continuing with language study and/or starting a second South Asian language, and choosing from a range of culture modules related to South Asia in the South Asia Department and in other departments on cinema, music, politics, economics, law, history.</p> <p>Year 3 includes an Independent Study Project that gives the student an opportunity to pursue a subject of personal interest (in language, literature, politics, culture, religion, the arts and media, or any other aspect of contemporary or historical India), leading to the writing of a 10,000-word dissertation under tutorial supervision; one language and one culture module at intermediate or advanced level or two culture modules at an advanced level, and a module in another subject ('open option').</p> <p>Introductory language modules taught in Year 1 assume no previous knowledge of the chosen language or its script: they</p>

	<p>start completely from scratch. Modules in modern languages concentrate on all four linguistic skills – understanding, speaking, reading and writing; classes are small and interactive, with students being encouraged to use the language actively from the outset. There is usually a 40/60 balance between coursework and exam in language modules. Many of our introductory language modules have been written especially for our needs by members of the Department staff; and Intermediate and advanced language modules feature a wide range of ‘real world’ teaching and study materials.</p> <p>Students with a more specific interest in South Asian languages are encouraged to apply or transfer to the BA South Asian Studies (4 years), which includes the Year Abroad.</p> <p><i>(Brief outline, including opportunities for project work, overseas study, integrated work experience etc. Include summary information about the dissertation.)</i></p>
Assessment summary	<p>Assessment for language modules typically involves a 20/20/60 balance between classroom tests and/or written coursework during the year, oral exam, and written exam.</p> <p>Assessment for culture modules typically varies between a 20/80 balance between coursework essays and final written exam, and 100% coursework essays.</p> <p><i>(Brief description of balance between coursework/exams, patterns of assessment etc.)</i></p>

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

(The initial statement below is standard text regarding the School’s general entrance requirements and should not be amended. There is then the opportunity for authors to add any requirements/arrangements specific to the programme.)

SOAS has general minimum entrance requirements for registration for an undergraduate degree and these can be viewed at <http://www.soas.ac.uk/admissions/ug/entryreq/>

- **A Levels:** ABB
- A Level language desirable but not essential

- **IB:** 34 (5/5/5)
- **BTEC:** DDM
- **Scottish Highers:** AABBB
- **Scottish Advanced Highers:** ABB
- **Irish LC:** 320 points from 5 Higher level subjects at grade C1 or above
- **Advanced Placement:** 4 4 4 (Two semesters - UCAS Group A) plus US HSGD with GPA 3.0
- **Euro Bacc:** 80%
- **French Bacc:** 14/20
- **German Abitur:** 2.0
- **Italy DES:** 80/100
- **Austria Mat:** 2.0
- **Polish Mat:** 75%

(Authors to add any additional requirements specific to the programme. Authors should also insert any relevant information regarding admission processes e.g. interview.)

PROGRAMME AIMS

What will this programme give the student an opportunity to achieve?

(Programme aims are broad statements of intent which should reflect the School's purpose in offering the programme of study. They are overall, synoptic statements which should be presented as bullet points (there should not normally be more than three or four of them). They should be written in language which is accessible to a lay audience (the use of jargon should be avoided, and any acronyms should be explained).)

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To achieve an excellent and broad-ranging foundational knowledge of the culture of South Asia, given by scholars at the forefront of their disciplines.</i> • <i>To grasp how each discipline approaches its object of study and organizes knowledge differently, by studying the same area from the standpoint of different intellectual traditions.</i> • <i>To prepare the student for either working in South Asian societies or in a context with South Asian connections, such as with South Asian diaspora in the UK.</i> |
|---|

PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

What will the student learn?

(Learning outcomes are statements of what a student is expected to know/understand/do by the end of the programme. They are set at a level appropriate to the award, and authors might find it helpful to refer to the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

*(<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/fheq/default.asp>) for further information on levels of awards. Learning outcomes are related to teaching, learning and assessment methods described later in the programme specification, and to the curriculum, but are expressed as general statements of learning under four headings: **Knowledge:** normally subject-based, describing the factual/conceptual base of the field of study and the level of complexity to be achieved.*

Intellectual (thinking) skills: might encompass independent research, analysis, synthesis, evaluation of concepts, problem solving, interpretation of statistical data, critical literature review, resource discovery (electronic and print) etc.

Subject-based practical skills: these will be discipline specific, for example performance skills, design and creative skills, IT skills for data processing etc.

Transferable skills: broader skills for life, which might include problem solving, oral and written communication, accessing and exploitation of electronic information resources, teamwork or other skills particularly relevant to specific subsequent employment.

Again, bullet points should be used and three or four learning outcomes in each section would be appropriate. Please keep in mind the student audience and use language which is fit for purpose. It is also helpful to focus on aspects which might make the programme distinctive or even unique. Where a programme has a number of pathways, it is useful to identify any learning outcomes that are specific to each pathway.)

Knowledge

- a broad knowledge and understanding of South Asian culture, in its historical and contemporary developments;
- a coherent and detailed knowledge of selected aspects of South Asian society (including politics, law, economy) and/or culture (cinema, music, literature, art, religion), taught by specialists at the forefront of their disciplines;
- a detailed knowledge of a selected area of South Asia (India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh).
- if students decide to pursue language study, a competence in speaking, reading and writing a South Asian language that will enable students to work in South Asia or with South Asians;

Intellectual (thinking) skills

- the ability to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques at the forefront of knowledge related to South Asia.
- the ability to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research in the various disciplines relating to South Asia;
- an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge related to South Asia, and in particular of conflicting ideas and debates relating to history, language, culture, and politics.
- the ability to manage one's own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources such as research articles and/or original materials related to South Asia.

Subject-based practical skills

- Analyse cultural data and make judgements on the basis of conflicting evidence.
- Assess the validity of different approaches to the same data or ideas.
- Research cultural phenomena through both primary and secondary sources, making appropriate use of library and online resources.
- If students choose to pursue language study, the ability to comprehend, and communicate in, a South Asian language — through both speech and writing.

Transferable skills

The programme will encourage students to:

- Write and speak with clarity and concision.
- Use a variety of sources as research materials.
- Work to deadlines.
- Develop self-reflexiveness.
- Develop an understanding of the relativity of cultures and “cultural” (or encultured) attitudes.
- Assess the validity of arguments and make judgements on complex situations

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS FOR GAINING AN AWARD

How will the student’s study be structured? How will they achieve an award?

(The initial statement below is standard text regarding SOAS requirements relating to the structure and duration of programmes and requirements for gaining an award and should not be amended. Individual authors should then complete the programme structure diagram with information relevant to this programme.)

Structure, duration and requirements for gaining an award

SOAS has standard requirements relating to the structure and duration of undergraduate programmes and for the award and classification of these programmes. Details can be found at

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/registry/degreeregulations/file60378.pdf>

Students take the equivalent of 4 module units each year. Students may decide after Year 1 whether they want to pursue language study or not. If students decide they want to focus more specifically on language study, they can change to the 4-year degree in South Asian Studies, which includes an intensive language-learning module in the third year (Year abroad). If a student passes 4 module units in one pathway language then the language may be optionally named in the degree title, e.g. South Asian Studies (Hindi). Text, Directed Readings and literature modules and an ISP in which the language is used to a large extent all count as language modules. Students must discuss this with their UG tutor at the end of year 1 or the beginning of year 2. The specialism will be added at the award stage only, when the degree has been completed, and will not feature during application or enrolment.

Programme structure diagram

Below is a structure diagram for this programme.

(To be completed by individuals completing the template. It is intended that the structure grid should provide a clear picture of the module units to be taken as the student progresses through the programme. The “status” column should indicate whether the module is “core”, “compulsory” etc. The final column provides an opportunity for authors to add any further relevant information which might relate to options, prerequisites, pathways etc.)

Level	Year of stud	Module code	Module title	Credit	Status	Notes
--------------	---------------------	--------------------	---------------------	---------------	---------------	--------------

	y					
4	1	15590081 2	South Asian Culture	30	core	
4	1		Language module from list A below	30	Option 1	Usually Bengali/Hindi/Nepali/Sanskrit/Urdu 1 unless student has prior language knowledge
4	1		EITHER a further Module from list A below OR a module from list B	30	Option 2	Might be made up of 2 half-modules to the value of one unit
4	1		EITHER further Module from list B below OR an approve module ('open option')		Option 3	Might be made up of 2 half-modules to the value of one unit
5	2		EITHER Cinema and Society in South Asia: History and Social Context and AND Cinema and Society in South Asia: Key Themes, OR South Asian Literature in English	30	Core	
5	2		a language module or modules from List A OR a module Or modules from List	30	Option 1	

			C to the value of 1 unit			
5	2		A further Module from list A or list C below	30	Option 2	
5	2		A further Module from list A or list C below OR an approved module ('open option')	30	Option 3	
6	3	155900955	Independent Study Project in South Asian Studies	30	Compulsory	Must be at intermediate or advanced level
6			Module from list A below	30	Option 1	
6			Module from list C below	30	Option 2	
6	3		A further Module from list C below OR an approved module ('open option')	30	Option 3	

List A South Asian language modules

The list below indicates the pathway along which students can progress as they do their South Asian language modules. Students may not take more than one language module at elementary level in any given year. Passing of the intermediate level module (or its equivalent) in Bengali OR Hindi OR Nepali OR Sanskrit OR Urdu is a prerequisite for admission to the Year Abroad.

Elementary level

- [Bengali Language 1](#)
- [Hindi Language 1](#)
- [Nepali Language 1](#)

- [Sanskrit Language 1](#)
- [Urdu Language 1](#)
- [Basic Pali](#)
- [Introduction to Prakrit](#) (0.5)
- Elementary Written Persian (Dept. of the Near & Middle East)

Intermediate level

- [Bengali Language 2](#)
- [Hindi Language 2](#)
- [Nepali Language 2](#)
- [Sanskrit Language 2](#)
- [Urdu Language 2](#)
- [Urdu Literacy](#)
- [Pali](#): Intermediate level
- [Readings in Prakrit](#) (0.5)

Advanced level

- [Hindi Language 3](#)
- Hindi Language 4
- Literature and Colonialism in North India (0.5) Term 1
- Narratives of Mobility in Hindi Literature (0.5) Term 2
- [Directed Readings in a South Asian Literature or Culture \(Bengali\)](#) (0.5)
- [Directed Readings in a South Asian Literature or Culture \(Hindi\)](#) (0.5)
- [Nepali Language 3](#)
- [Directed Readings in a South Asian Literature or Culture \(Nepali\)](#) (0.5)
- [Classical Sanskrit Court Literature](#)
- Selected Texts in Sanskrit Epic
- Vedic Sanskrit (Dept. of the Study of Religion)
- [Directed Readings in Sanskrit](#) (0.5)
- [Directed Readings in a South Asian Literature or Culture \(Urdu\)](#) (0.5)

List B Introductory modules on aspects of South Asian history and culture

- Buddhism: Foundation (0.5)
- Hinduism: Foundation (0.5)
- Introduction to Jainism
- H140 Introduction to the History of South Asia
- Intro to South and South Eastern Asian Art and Archaeology (0.5, Term 1)
- Legal Systems of Asia and Africa

List C Non-language-based South Asian and South Asian-related modules

Some modules require successful attendance of a relevant introductory module; students are advised to check the relevant module descriptions for prerequisites and consult the relevant module tutor before selecting units.

Department of the Languages and Cultures of South Asia

- Cinema and Society in South Asia: History and Social Context (0.5)
- Cinema and Society in South Asia: Key Themes (0.5)
- [Society, Culture and Politics in Nepal](#)
- [South Asian Literature in English](#)
- [Extended Essay in South Asian Studies](#) (0.5)

-

School of Law

- [Law and society of South Asia](#)

Department of Politics and International Studies

- [Government and politics of South Asia](#)
- International Relations of South Asia

Department of History

- H234 Culture and Identity in Modern South Asia 1800-2000
- H236 State and Society in Mughal India
- [Gandhi And Gandhiism](#)
- [Histories Of Partition: India and Pakistan, I](#)
- Histories of Partition: India and Pakistan, II

Department of Art and Archaeology

- Early Indian Art
- Gandharan Art and its Heritage
- Imag(in)ing Buddhas in South Asia (1)
- Art and Empire in India 1300-1800
- Art and Empire in Early Modern South India
- Court arts in Mughal and Rajput North India
- Traditional art and modern South Asia (0.5)

Department of Music

- Music and Religion in South Asia (0.5)
- Classical singing in India: continuity and change (0.5)

Department of the Study of Religions

- [Religious Philosophies of Ancient and Medieval India](#)
- Modern Indian Philosophy
- [Theravada Buddhism](#)
- [Non-Violence in Jain Literature, Philosophy and Law](#)

Department of Anthropology and Sociology

- [Ethnography of a selected region - South Asia](#)

Department of Economics

- [Economic development of South Asia](#) (Year 3)

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

What methods will be used to achieve the learning outcomes?

(Provide details of the teaching, learning and assessment methods to be used, cross-referenced to the learning outcomes given above (listing under the same four headings might be helpful). Audience awareness is again important in relation to language used. The following examples might provide general guidance:

Knowledge: *subject knowledge is often developed through lectures and seminars, supplemented by directed study of texts/journal articles and by assignment or project work. Assessment is generally through unseen written examinations, but most assessment methods will require some demonstration of subject knowledge and understanding.*

Intellectual (thinking) skills: *skills such as analysis, synthesis, evaluation and application are often practised and demonstrated through active learning processes involving assignments or projects, and group learning activities (seminars/tutorials, workshops, fieldtrips etc). Assessment might utilise written examinations or problem-*

based exercises. Independent project work or research dissertations might be used to demonstrate subject-specific intellectual skills.

Subject-based practical skills: *this will vary from discipline to discipline, but will generally require development through opportunities to practise the activity in an appropriate learning context (for example in a laboratory, studio or work placement).*

Workbooks/practice manuals might also be provided. Assessment of competence in exercising a practical skill must involve demonstration of it.

Transferable skills: *skills that are readily transferable to employment and related contexts such as communication, teamwork etc can be developed through naturally arising opportunities within the curriculum or through work placements. Written communication will be enhanced through essay/dissertation writing or writing up projects. Oral communication can be developed in presentations and group work. Team working skills may be demonstrated and assessed through collaborative projects.)*

Knowledge

- a broad knowledge and understanding of South Asian culture, in its historical and contemporary developments is taught through a survey lecture module and tutorials, assessed through coursework essays and unseen exam;
- coherent and detailed knowledge of selected aspects of South Asian society (including politics, law, economy) and/or culture (cinema, music, literature, art, religion) will be developed through lecture modules delivered by specialists at the forefront of their disciplines; large lecture modules will also involve tutorials for small groups. Assessment will be through a combination of classroom presentations, coursework essays, written exams and the writing of an extended essay or Independent Study Project on a topic of the student's choice, which will involve the selection and analysis of primary texts and the critical discussion and assessment of secondary materials.
- the detailed knowledge of a selected area of South Asia (India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh) will be developed through disciplinary modules related to that area, the ISP, and language learning (optional after year 1).
- If students decide to pursue language study, competence in speaking, reading and writing a South Asian language will be achieved through a progression of language modules taught in small groups that will develop and test all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing); assessment will consist of classroom tests, written coursework, oral presentations and written and oral exams. Intermediate and advanced language modules and text modules will use a wide range of "real world" cultural texts;

Intellectual (thinking) skills

- the ability to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques at the forefront of knowledge related to South Asia, will be developed through lectures, tutorials, oral presentations, classroom discussions, and essay-writing;
- the ability to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research in the various disciplines relating to South Asia will be developed through readings for lectures, tutorials, and oral presentations, and through classroom discussions and essay-writing;
- the appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge related to South Asia will be developed through the discussion of the conflicting ideas and debates relating to history, language, culture, and politics in lectures,

tutorials, classroom discussions and questions set for coursework and exam essays.

- the ability to manage one's own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources such as research articles and/or original materials related to South Asia will be developed by encouraging students to choose their own topics for coursework essays in years 2 and 4 and for the Independent Study Project.

Subject-based practical skills

- The ability to analyse cultural data and make judgements on the basis of conflicting evidence will be fostered through module readings from year 1 onwards;
- The ability to assess the validity of different approaches to the same data or ideas will be fostered through essay questions and classroom discussions;
- The ability to research cultural phenomena through both primary and secondary sources, making appropriate use of library and online resources, will be fostered in particular in the written essays, oral presentations and Independent Study Project.
- If students decide to pursue language study, the ability to comprehend, and communicate in, a South Asian language through both speech and writing will be fostered in the language modules;

Transferable skills

The programme will encourage students to:

- Write and speak with clarity and concision by giving setting clear guidelines and giving detailed feedback to essays and presentations from year 1 onward;
- Use a variety of sources as research materials in their essays, oral presentations and Independent Study Project. This is particular exhilarating for students in their final year, who find they can write on quite original topics using materials that no one has used before;
- Work to deadlines, with clear deadlines for essays and penalty for late submission.
- Develop self-reflexiveness through classroom discussion, feedback on essays and presentations, and module assessment.
- Develop an understanding of the relativity of cultures and “cultural” (or encultured) attitudes, particularly through classroom discussion.
- Assess the validity of arguments and make judgements on complex situations, in particular in essays and presentations.

REFERENCE POINTS

What has been the basis for the design of this programme?

(Include reference points to demonstrate that what students will achieve has currency in academic, professional or employer communities. These might include:

- *institutional mission statements and any institutional policies on the development of general skills in fields such as communication, information technology, team working and career management;*
- *subject benchmark statements;*

- *current research or other advanced scholarship carried out by academic staff;*
- *requirements of professional and statutory regulatory bodies;*
- *occupational standards in fields where these are relevant;*
- *qualification descriptors used in the national qualifications framework;*
- *relevant European or international reference points.)*

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

(The following text is standard information common to all programme specifications and should not be amended by individuals completing the template except where indicated.)

SOAS has internal procedures to assure the quality of provision to be offered to students and to enhance the quality in the light of experience following delivery, taking into account the input of external experts and students. The procedures are set out in the School's Quality Assurance Handbook and can be viewed at (<http://www.soas.ac.uk/add/qualityassurance/quality-assurance-handbook/>).

SOAS is also subject to periodic external review from bodies such as the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and relevant professional and statutory regulatory bodies.

The procedures described in the Quality Assurance Handbook are in place to provide a high quality student experience for those choosing to study at SOAS, and student input and evaluation of their experiences is greatly valued. Students make an input to the ongoing development of their programmes, and the environment in which they operate, in a number of ways, including:

- formal student evaluation as part of the annual programme review;
- student representation on School committees at various levels (through the Students' Union) where many relevant issues are discussed;
- *Authors to add any further methods which are particularly relevant to this programme.*

FURTHER INFORMATION

(The following text is standard information common to all programme specifications and should not be amended by individuals completing the template except where indicated.)

Add in links to other relevant information, both internal and external, including:

- [SOAS Vision and Strategy Statement](#);
- [Undergraduate](#) and [Postgraduate](#) Handbooks;
- Departmental handbooks?;
- [Quality Assurance Handbook](#);
- [UCAS website](#);
- [QAA website](#);