



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

LIBERAL ARTS AND NATURAL SCIENCES



Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences

Our prestigious Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences programme is designed for talented students who want to study a variety of subjects at degree level. You will create new intellectual connections between a range of subjects to help you become part of the next generation of innovative thinkers and leaders.

Why study Liberal Arts and Sciences at Birmingham?

Our programme allows you to gain a truly interdisciplinary perspective across a broad range of subjects. Packed with unique and distinctive features, you will build a degree based on your individual interests that allows you to connect the arts, humanities and sciences in new ways. This will unlock your creativity, increase mental agility, and expand your capacity to think critically.

You will create your own programme which combines arts and/or sciences and/or social sciences. You will typically pick one subject as your Major, which you will study in depth and serves as your specialism. This is then complemented with subjects suiting your interests to give you an original portfolio of expertise at graduation.

By studying at Birmingham, you will explore new perspectives and examine contemporary issues by drawing on the University's wide-ranging disciplinary expertise. A key element of this programme is the opportunity to engage with staff and students from outside the disciplines you are studying. As an English student in dialogue with a Physicist, or a Biologist in dialogue with a Sociologist, you will be exposed to unique perspectives and develop alternative ways to approach your studies and the challenges of the future.

FACT

At Birmingham, our undergraduate teaching is built on a foundation of over a hundred years of research and teaching excellence. In the latest Research Excellence Framework (REF), more than 81% of all research carried out was rated as internationally excellent or world-leading.

At the heart of the programme, you will find a distinctive mix of extracurricular opportunities. These give you access to a range of cultural, business and academic experiences which will support you in your development. You will also have the opportunity to study abroad at one of our outstanding partner institutions. Our exchange programme is embedded in your studies and provides you with access to new cultures, methods of teaching, and a range of incomparable opportunities.

The programme is four years, which includes a compulsory Year Abroad. Following consultation with your personal tutor, you can choose to graduate with a BA or BSc qualification or you can take the option of an integrated undergraduate Masters and graduate with an MArt or MSci provided you have completed the required credits for your chosen qualification.

If you prefer the Natural Sciences, our flexible programme allows you to follow a broader scientific education. This route allows you to develop your skills and knowledge from a range of scientific disciplines, igniting your natural enthusiasm for science and preparing you for your career with an original and pragmatic view. At the end of the degree programme, you will then graduate with a BSc or MSci in Natural Sciences.

What will I study?

Our academic staff will help you choose modules which interest and challenge you, creating a personalised programme that suits your evolving interests and specialisms. An important aspect of the Liberal Arts and Sciences degree is the flexibility to choose your Major as you progress through your studies, rather than committing to a Major at the outset. To see our flexibility,



'Liberal Arts and Sciences has shown me the importance of leadership and employability, both of which are vital in securing a job.'

RICHARD, Political Science Major

you can view real student pathways at www.birmingham.ac.uk/lanspathways

Year 1

There are 120 credits in an academic year. During Year 1, you will normally take 40–60 credits in your potential Major subject, 40–60 credits from a selection of modules drawn from across the University, and 20 credits from the Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences compulsory breadth modules. You will work closely with your tutor to hone your academic skills and ensure that you are on the right track to develop an interesting and meaningful portfolio of expertise. You will also participate in a wide range of extracurricular activities, which typically include drama at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, academic and cultural workshops, and a team-building trip to the University's Priestly Centre in the Lake District.

Year 2

Year 2 will normally see you consolidate your expertise in your Major subject by taking more advanced modules in your field. You will also continue to take a wide selection of modules from other subjects, and 20 credits from the

Discover the Natural Sciences:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/natsci



'No other degree I have come across makes you a more attractive graduate. In an increasingly competitive job market we must do everything we can to make ourselves stand out from the crowd.'

ALICE, Philosophy Major

Liberal Arts and Sciences compulsory breadth modules. You will also be planning your Year Abroad. With your tutor's advice, you will create a shortlist drawn from the University's partner institutions. In recent years, Year 2 has culminated in a trip to Brussels to learn more about the European Union.

Year 3

You will spend your third year at one of our partner institutions around the world, where you will ordinarily pursue further study in your Major subject, deepening your knowledge and taking up the challenges offered by new and unfamiliar learning methods. The year spent at a university abroad also offers you the chance to enrol in a different portfolio of modules, taking advantage of alternative approaches to subjects, offered in a fresh academic context. Towards the end of this year, you will be thinking about how to shape your final year of study, and choosing the modules that will ultimately define your degree.

Year 4

During your final year, you will normally undertake a dissertation or extended project, either in your Major subject area or within Liberal Arts and Sciences. Typically, you will be developing your expertise in your Major to a high level. This is also when you finally decide whether to graduate with a BA, BSc, MA or MSci in Liberal Arts and Sciences or a BSc or MSci in Natural Sciences. This will be determined by the portfolio of modules which you have studied.

Possible Majors

You can pursue a wide range of subject Majors across the arts, humanities and sciences. Some subjects require particular grades at A level in order to study them. Major fields of study are recognised on your degree certificate, for instance BA Liberal Arts and Sciences (History) or BSc Natural Sciences (Environmental Science).

Breadth modules

Your breadth modules are studied alongside your Major. They will typically span areas very different to your Major and they will enable you to understand the way that specialists in other fields think and work.

Breadth modules enable you to become a flexible, interdisciplinary thinker with the ability to understand a range of challenges and issues in the arts, humanities and sciences. You will develop your ability to work within an interdisciplinary team and to pursue imaginative solutions to interesting and significant problems.

Natural Sciences

Our Natural Sciences pathway is the perfect choice for those who would like to concentrate on the natural sciences. You can study life sciences (such as biology and psychology), as well as physical sciences (such as physics and chemistry). Through open-minded inquiry, you will study different scientific disciplines to provide you with the knowledge and skills to tackle the challenges of 21st-century science.

You will be supported by leading researchers and encouraged to forge links across a breadth of subject areas, which will allow you to become a modern scientist capable of working in a multidisciplinary team. Depending on your credit attainment, you will also have the option to graduate with a BSc or MSci in Natural Sciences which will put you at an advantage if pursuing a scientific career after graduation.

As with all Liberal Arts and Sciences students, those on the Natural Sciences pathway will move between different Schools, mixing with other students across the University whilst retaining a home and support network within the Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences team. You will complete our compulsory modules, spend a year abroad, have multiple opportunities to undertake a range of cultural activities, and still be able to explore subjects from the arts and humanities should you choose.

Study abroad

There are opportunities to spend your year abroad in any corner of the globe. Our Universitas 21 scheme provides strong links with leading international universities and opens your passport for a world of discovery. For example, in 2018–19, we will have students in Australia, Canada, Chile, Israel, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Singapore, Sweden and the USA.

Throughout your time abroad, you will remain connected with Birmingham through regular contact with your personal tutor, whilst being fully integrated into the life of your host institution in order to become a worldwide citizen.

In addition to the Year Abroad, we organise multiple trips beyond the classroom. In previous years our students have visited the Lake District, Brussels, London, Romania and Rome.

Studying a language

If you are interested in studying a language as part of your degree, but not necessarily as a Major, then you have the option of taking language modules either as breadth modules or as extracurricular Open Access studies outside of your academic timetable.



'The course combines academic breadth with true flexibility. It offers great opportunities in terms of studying abroad and access to alumni through the Careers Network mentoring scheme.'

JENNIFER, Graduate, Economics and Chemistry Double Major

Extraordinary experience

An unimaginable, high-quality student experience underpins the Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences programme. Whether learning from international scholars or undertaking a range of trips, to working with the University's unique cultural collections, you will be able to explore the world contextually to develop your understanding of complex issues.

You will have exclusive access to our Cultural Programme, available only to Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences students. You will attend a series of thought-provoking cultural activities, all included in the cost of your tuition fees. Recent events have included Birmingham Royal Ballet's The Nutcracker,

RSC's Troilus and Cressida, performances by the Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra, Professor Alice Roberts' book tour for Tamed, the Fashioned From Nature exhibit at the V&A, and the Gymnastics World Cup. Learn more at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/lansculture

Preparing you for success

Studying at Birmingham sets you apart, and a Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences degree will give you the extra edge, to help you stand out in the international graduate market.

Supported by our Careers Network team, you will be encouraged to acquire and develop your skills for the jobs of tomorrow. We understand that many graduates now find employment in areas far removed from their primary area of study at university – or are likely to change careers several times in their lives.

Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences recognises this phenomenon and is designed to meet the growing demand from leading employers, in the UK and internationally, to produce a new generation of leaders, researchers, investigators and creative people who have the flexibility to adapt within this evolving landscape.

You can apply for one of our Careers Network mentoring schemes, which match current students with accomplished professionals, many of whom are alumni of the University of Birmingham. The mentor and student stay in regular contact, allowing the mentor to offer advice on finding the right job, CV building and interview practice. Ultimately, the scheme helps you to design exciting career trajectories and approaches to employability within a rapidly changing world.

Internationally, Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences graduates often progress to the legal professions, major consultancy and management firms, postgraduate study, graduate entry into medicine and many more diverse careers. The variety of your academic studies and extracurricular experience, alongside the Year Abroad, ensures that you will be highly sought by graduate employers.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Typical offer:

A*AA–AAA or 36–35 in the IB Diploma

Admissions essay:

Applicants will be asked to complete an admissions essay shortly after submitting their UCAS application. Learn more at www.birmingham.ac.uk/lansessay

Required subjects and grades:

You do not require specific A level subjects or IB higher level subjects to be accepted onto the Liberal Arts and Sciences course itself, but you may need specific subjects to study certain Majors after you enrol, as shown at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/lansmajors



LEARN MORE

Email: lans@contacts.bham.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)121 415 8236
www.birmingham.ac.uk/lans

Image of the Hong Kong skyline credited to Jeevan Rishi-Raj; Image of the RSC's production of Twelfth Night credited to Manuel Harlan © RSC.

This leaflet was written several months in advance of the start of the academic year. It is intended to provide prospective students with a general picture of the programmes and courses offered by the School. Please note that not all programmes or all courses are offered every year. Also, because our research is constantly exploring new areas and directions of study some courses may be discontinued and new ones offered in their place.

Please note the information in this brochure is correct at the time of publication but may be subject to change (June 2019).

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