

Encountering the City: Historical Enquiry in Action

This core module provides students with the base for in-depth study of specific aspects and processes of urban change, while developing acquaintance and understanding of key critical paradigms in social, political and cultural history. This is done through seminars, through core readings, but also by field visits and research on the cities' streets, squares, bridges and monuments, and an intensive study trip to London. Students will develop a sense of the "shape" of urban history through this concrete engagement with two cities and discover that moving around the city offers multiple opportunities for historical enquiry in action.

Module aims

- Students will acquire a foundation for the understanding of the history and development of the city, broadly speaking from the Middle Ages to modern times;
- they will engage in site-based study and discover how first-hand awareness of the material traces of the past in the city can inform their historical enquiry;
- they will develop a knowledge of advanced scholarship in the history and culture of the cities of Paris and London to a level appropriate for an MA;
- they will understand how to relate primary and secondary material to inform their understanding of the history and culture of the modern city and particularly Paris and London;
- they will acquire the critical skills to pursue optional modules and to develop their work towards a dissertation topic.

Structure

Teaching will begin with an extended site visit and will continue in 10 two-hour sessions. Students will be expected to produce formative written work for each site visit to use in the seminar discussions. Set readings will be communicated via the course handbook and each session will involve discussion, textual analysis and student presentations.