REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS  
(MA)

These Regulations apply to candidates admitted to the Master of Arts curriculum in the academic year 2022-23 and thereafter.

(See also General Regulations and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula)

Any publication based on work approved for a higher degree should contain a reference to the effect that the work was submitted to the University of Hong Kong for the award of the degree.

The degree of Master of Arts (MA) is a postgraduate degree awarded for the satisfactory completion of a prescribed course of study in one of the following fields: Art History; Chinese Historical Studies; Chinese Language and Literature; Creative Communications; English Studies; Hong Kong History; Linguistics; Literary and Cultural Studies; Music Studies and Translation. These fields of study will not necessarily be offered every year.

MA 1 Admission requirements

To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Arts, candidates

(a) shall comply with the General Regulations;¹
(b) shall comply with the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
(c) shall hold
(i) a Bachelor’s degree of this University; or a qualification of equivalent standard from this University or another comparable institution accepted for this purpose;
(ii) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Art History, either a Bachelor’s degree with a major in art history; or a Bachelor’s degree in another subject and substantial art-related experience;
(iii) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Chinese Language and Literature, a Bachelor’s degree with a major in Chinese or a closely related subject;
(iv) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of English Studies, a Bachelor’s degree with a major in English or a closely related subject;
(v) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Hong Kong History, a Bachelor’s degree with a major in history; or a Bachelor’s degree with a major in another subject with experience of studying history;
(vi) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Linguistics, a Bachelor’s degree with a major in Linguistics or a closely related subject;
(vii) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Music Studies, a Bachelor’s degree with a major in music; or a Bachelor’s degree with a major in another subject with experience studying music;
(viii) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Translation, a professional qualification deemed to be equivalent to a Bachelor’s

¹ In addition to the admission requirement specified in General Regulation G 2, the Faculty also requires:
(a) TOEFL: a Test of Written English (TWE) score of 4 or above or a Writing score of 25 or above in the internet-based TOEFL (not applicable to the MA in Chinese Historical Studies and the MA in Chinese Language and Literature); and
(b) IELTS: a minimum overall Band of 7 with no subtest lower than 5.5.
degree; and
(d) shall satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination if required.

MA 2 Qualifying examination

(a) A qualifying examination and/or interview may be set to test the candidates’ formal academic ability or their ability to follow the courses of study prescribed. It shall consist of one or more written papers or their equivalent and may include a project report.
(b) Candidates who are required to satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination and/or interview shall not be permitted to register unless they have satisfied the examiners in the examination and/or interview.

MA 3 Award of degree

To be eligible for the award of the degree of Master of Arts, candidates

(a) shall comply with the General Regulations;
(b) shall comply with the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula; and
(c) shall complete the curriculum as prescribed in the syllabuses and satisfy the examiners in accordance with the regulations set out below.

MA 4 Period of study

(a) The curriculum shall normally extend
   (i) in the fields of Art History, Creative Communications, Linguistics, and Music Studies, over one academic year of full-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years;
   (ii) in the fields of Chinese Historical Studies and Translation, over two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of four academic years;
   (iii) in the field of Chinese Language and Literature, over one academic year of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or four academic years of part-time study; and
   (iv) in the fields of English Studies, Hong Kong History, and Literary and Cultural Studies, over one academic year of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or three academic years of part-time study.
(b) Candidates shall not be permitted to extend their studies beyond the maximum period of registration specified in MA 4(a), unless otherwise permitted or required by the Board of the Faculty.

MA 5 Completion of curriculum

To complete the curriculum, candidates

(a) shall satisfy the requirements prescribed in TPG 6 of the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
(b) shall follow courses of instruction and complete satisfactorily all prescribed written work;
(c) shall complete and present a satisfactory capstone experience on a subject within their fields of study;
(d) shall satisfy the examiners in all prescribed courses and in any prescribed form of
assessment as prescribed in the syllabuses; and
(e) shall satisfy the examiners in an oral examination if required.

MA 6 Advanced standing

Advanced Standing may be granted to candidates in the field of Translation in recognition of studies completed successfully before admission to the curriculum. Candidates who are awarded Advanced Standing will not be granted any further credit transfer for those studies for which Advanced Standing has been granted. The amount of credits to be granted for Advanced Standing shall be determined by the Board of the Faculty, in accordance with the following principles:

(a) a candidate may be granted a total of not more than 20% of the total credits normally required under a curriculum for Advanced Standing unless otherwise approved by the Senate;
(b) application for Advanced Standing will only be considered if the previous studies were done within 5 years before admission to the curriculum;
(c) Advanced Standing will not be granted for elective course and capstone experience; and
(d) credits granted for Advanced Standing shall not normally be included in the calculation of the GPA unless permitted by the Board of the Faculty but will be recorded on the transcript of the candidate.

MA 7 Capstone experience

Subject to the provisions of Regulation MA 5(c), the title of the capstone experience (dissertation, portfolio or individual project) shall be submitted for approval by a date as prescribed in the syllabuses for each field of study. Similarly, the capstone experience shall be presented by a date as prescribed in the syllabuses for each field of study. Candidates shall submit a statement that the capstone experience represents their own work (or in the case of conjoint work, a statement countersigned by their co-worker(s), which shows their share of the work) undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree.

MA 8 Assessment

(a) The assessment for each course shall be as specified in the syllabuses. Only passed courses will earn credits. Grades in all fields of study shall be awarded in accordance with TPG 9(a) of the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula.
(b) Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners on the first attempt in not more than two courses, excluding the capstone experience, in an academic year may be permitted to
(i) present themselves for re-examination in the failed course(s) on a specified date or re-submit their work for the failed course(s) for re-assessment within a specified period determined by the Board of Examiners for Taught Postgraduate Curricula, but no later than the end of the following semester (not including the summer semester); or
(ii) repeat the failed course(s) by undergoing instruction and satisfying the assessment requirements; or
(iii) for elective courses, take another course in lieu and satisfy the assessment requirements.
(c) Subject to the provisions of Regulation MA 5(c), candidates who have failed to present a satisfactory capstone experience may be permitted to revise and re-present the capstone experience within a specified period determined by the Board of Examiners for Taught Postgraduate Curricula.
(d) There shall be no appeal against the results of examinations and all other forms of assessment.

MA 9  Discontinuation

Candidates who

(a) are not permitted to present themselves for re-examination/re-submission in any written examination or coursework assessment in which they have failed to satisfy the examiners or to repeat the failed course(s); or
(b) are not permitted to revise and re-present the capstone experience; or
(c) have failed to satisfy the examiners on second attempt in any coursework assessment, examination, or the capstone experience; or
(d) have failed more than two courses, excluding the capstone experience, on the first attempt in an academic year; or
(e) have exceeded the maximum period of registration as specified in MA 4

may be required to discontinue their studies under the provisions of General Regulation G 12.

MA 10  Assessment results

On successful completion of the curriculum, candidates who have shown exceptional merit may be awarded a mark of distinction, and this mark shall be recorded in the candidates’ degree diploma.

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
(MA)

HONG KONG HISTORY

These Syllabuses apply to candidates admitted to the Master of Arts in the field of Hong Kong History in the academic year 2022-23 and thereafter.

The MA in the field of Hong Kong History is taught by the Department of History and provides advanced training in the skills and methodologies of academic history. This MA focuses upon the modern history of Hong Kong as a part of global history. One required course introduces skills and methods in historical research and writing. Elective courses provide students with the ability to explore a variety of aspects of Hong Kong’s history. The MA dissertation is a capstone course in which students develop a specialist area of research under the guidance of an expert supervisor.

The MA curriculum comprises six semester-long courses and a dissertation, distributed in the following way:

1 required core course (9 credits)
3 elective MA courses (9 credits each)
2 elective courses cross-listed with undergraduate courses (6 credits each)
1 MA dissertation (12 credits)

All instruction is in English and assessment is 100% coursework, which may include discussion, oral presentations, research essays, and various kinds of short writing assignments.
Not all of the elective courses listed below will be offered each year.

COURSES

(1) All MA students are required to take the following core course.

HIST7008. Doing Hong Kong History: Methods, Debates, and Sources (9 credits)

This core course examines a range of themes, problems, and issues in Hong Kong’s history. The goals of the course are to familiarize students with the ways scholars have approached Hong Kong history; assess how theories based on other historical experiences can be used to understand Hong Kong history; and introduce primary sources for studying Hong Kong history. Students will develop the skills necessary for writing about Hong Kong history at an advanced level; acquire the knowledge required to pursue independent research and draft an effective dissertation research proposal; and learn to use scholarly citations properly and in accordance with disciplinary standards and conventions. Assessment: 100% coursework.

(2) Students choose three MA electives from the following list.

HIST7009. Health and Medicine in Hong Kong (9 credits)

In this course we explore health and medicine in Hong Kong from the First Opium War to the present. Adopting a chronological and cross-cutting thematic approach, we consider the evolution of the state and its institutions in relation to a number of health challenges: from malaria and plague in the nineteenth century to novel zoonotic infections, such as SARS and COVID-19, in the twenty-first century; from the health impacts of mass-migration to cancer and super-ageing today. To what extent did Western medicine serve as an instrument of colonial power? Conversely, how did the expansion of health services in the twentieth century contribute to Hong Kong’s social transformation? And finally, how have race, gender, and class influenced health priorities? In addressing these questions, we consider developments in Hong Kong in relation to broader interregional and global phenomena: from war and revolution to financial crisis and climate change. Assessment: 100% coursework.

HIST7010. Histories of Childhood in Colonial Hong Kong (9 credits)

What difference did colonial conditions make to being a ‘child,’ an ‘adolescent,’ or a young person in Hong Kong? This course considers these questions and explores youth as a social group, along with the different kinds of social, symbolic and political roles that adults ascribed to children and youth in colonial-era Hong Kong. Over the last two centuries modernizers redefined childhood and youth as a matter of public importance, and established notion of their ‘best interest’ and ideal social roles. Linking Hong Kong with the wider British Empire and other imperial and colonial contexts this course engages with the issue of how adult society understood – or misunderstood – those who were young, and how interpretations and representations of youth and childhood impacted upon those thus defined. Ultimately, the course argues for the need to think critically about what we think we know about childhood and youth, and how age intersected with race, class, gender and other categories in colonial contexts. Assessment: 100% coursework.

HIST7011. Laws of Hong Kong in Global History (9 credits)

This course studies how important global moments matter to the legal history of Hong Kong. It teaches students to see Hong Kong legal system and its “rule of law” not only as an institution to address local needs but as a response to global changes/trends in norms, values, and geopolitical relationship. It will demonstrate how Hong Kong laws responded to and were impacted by global
colonialism, regional revolutionary activities, communism, Cold War, decolonization and the rise of China. Students do not need to have prior legal knowledge to attend this course.
Assessment: 100% coursework.

HIST7012. Hong Kong: Uncertain(city) (9 credits)

Hong Kong is a city built on speculation. This course examines Hong Kong’s history of instability, anxiety, contingency, and panic through a study of its built environment. Through a series of readings, intensive in-course discussions, and student presentations, we will trace the various impacts of uncertainty as they have become inscribed within the city’s architecture and urban form over the last 180 years. Through an engagement with both primary and secondary sources, we will explore the historical range of influences that have shaped Hong Kong’s physical development, including the city’s identity as a port, its population density, its cosmopolitanism, transnational flows of goods, money, and people, the effects of both colonial and post-colonial governing systems, contagion and disease, as well as climate, among others. Students will be expected to actively engage, react to, and build upon these themes in in-class discussions and the completion of a research project of their own choosing.
Assessment: 100% coursework.

HIST7013. Planning and Building Hong Kong (9 credits)

This course investigates the histories of urbanism in Hong Kong and the different urban processes that have shaped and continue to shape the city’s built environment. By tracing the advent of new planning and building projects initiated in different periods, students are invited to consider not only how buildings, streets, infrastructure and urban spaces were designed and put to use, but also why. Discussions throughout the course will engage with questions related to contemporary urbanization and consider how historical knowledge may impart a better understanding of the environmental challenges we are facing in the 21st century.
Assessment: 100% coursework.

HIST7014. Gender and Sexuality in Hong Kong (9 credits)

Using gender as a category of historical analysis and drawing on a wide range of sources, this course provides an introduction to gender and sexuality in Hong Kong. Topics to be discussed include: marriage and divorce; family and parenthood; concubinage and female servitude; land and inheritance; patriarchy and colonial rule; gender hierarchies and sexual norms; education, sport, and work. Students will learn to apply concepts, theories, and methodologies in the history of gender and sexuality to the case of Hong Kong; analyse historical events that shaped gender roles and stereotypes; evaluate the impacts of sexual and reproductive health campaigns by government, philanthropical, and religious groups; and examine how individuals in Hong Kong conformed to and resisted the state’s intervention into their sexual and reproductive experience at different historical points.
Assessment: 100% coursework.

HIST7015. The History of Business in Hong Kong (9 credits)

This course will introduce students to the historical development of business in Hong Kong from 1841 to the present day and provide them with an understanding of how Hong Kong became the business hub it is today. The course consists of a series of seminars that will cover both thematic readings and more focused case studies of Western and Chinese businesses in Hong Kong. Through these seminars, students will learn about the early role of Hong Kong businesses in the China trade, the role both Chinese and Western multinational companies in Hong Kong played in connecting Hong Kong and mainland China to the global economy in the 19th and 20th centuries, the growth of Hong Kong into an industrial hub starting in the 1950s, and the contribution of Hong Kong entrepreneurs to China’s rapid economic growth since the 1970s. In addition, individual tutorials and independent research
assignments will develop the students’ ability to conduct historical research with a focus on Hong Kong business history.
Assessment: 100% coursework.

HIST7016. City on the Move: Transport and Mobility in Hong Kong History (9 credits)

Hong Kong is often described as a place where “East meets West,” a place where the population is transient, and a place which facilitates the movement of people, goods and capital. This course explores the history of this mobility in Hong Kong. The various land, water, and air transport networks in Hong Kong have shaped the city. Using both primary and secondary sources, students will gain an appreciation of how the development of transport in Hong Kong has historically shaped Hong Kong society. This course approaches the issue of transport from multiple perspectives, such as its physical development, the technology used, and its social impact. It also considers Hong Kong transport outside of the city, such as through how it facilitates links between Hong Kong and the world, and how global events can have local and regional effects. Through readings and in-class discussions, students will be invited to reconsider their own interactions with these transport networks.
Assessment: 100% coursework.

(3) Students choose two undergraduate electives from the following list. Students will not be permitted to re-enrol in the undergraduate elective if they previously enrolled in it whilst studying for any undergraduate degree at HKU.

HIST3065. Workshop in historical research (6 credits)

The research skills and methodologies used by historians are based on the critical analysis of primary and secondary sources. Competency in these skills and an acquaintance with the various methodologies of the historian are central to advanced studies in the historical discipline, but these skills and methodologies are also highly transferable to the workplace. In this course, students will work in small groups on a research project. Learning will be through directed group discussions and coordinated individual research tasks. The course will introduce students to a wide range of historical sources, equip them with the skills to analyze and interpret those sources, and will also encourage students to develop leadership and team-work roles in solving real historical problems.
Assessment: 100% coursework.

HIST3076. Tourism and history (6 credits)

Tourism has been described as the largest peaceful movement of people. It also plays an important economic function in many societies. But tourism is never simply about travel and economics. It both reflects and influences identity, culture, society, urban planning, politics, and history. National or local identity, for example, is often forged through images produced or reproduced for tourists, while tourism often represents how a place views itself, how it is viewed by others, and how it wants to be viewed. This course considers these issues by examining a range of works on tourism worldwide and asking how they apply to tourism in Hong Kong since the mid-1900s. The course examines both the outward-facing aspects (a place presenting itself to the world) of tourism and the inward-looking aspects (convincing the local public that it should open that place to tourists).
Assessment: 100% coursework.

HIST4024. Writing Hong Kong history (6 credits)

This course looks at various themes, problems, and issues in Hong Kong’s history since the 1800s. Rather than focusing on historical events, we will look at the ways in which certain themes have been studied. Thus we will be less concerned with dates and facts than with analysis and interpretation. Topics include: general approaches to Hong Kong history, the Opium War and the British occupation of Hong Kong, colonial education, regulation of prostitution and the mui tsai system, colonial
medicine, colonialism and nationalism, WWII and the Japanese occupation, industrialization and economic development, history and identity, legacies and artifices of colonial rule, and history and memory. The goals of the course are to introduce students to the ways in which scholars have approached Hong Kong history, assess how theories based on other historical experiences can be used to understand Hong Kong history, and help students learn to argue effectively in written and oral presentations.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

HIST4033. Museums and history (6 credits)

Museums have become one of the most popular ways of telling history. Many scholars argue that museums are not neutral places; rather, they are often used for a wide range of strategic purposes: regulating social behavior, building citizenship and national identity, and expanding state power. But museums also face a variety of constraints and challenges: culture, money, politics, physical space, locating and selecting appropriate artifacts, and forming narratives. This course considers these issues by looking at history museums and heritage preservation in Hong Kong. The goals of the course are to familiarize students with a range of theoretical approaches to museum studies; explore the ways in which museums and heritage preservation can be used to further certain political, cultural, and commercial agendas; and help students learn to write an analytical research essay based on readings and museum fieldwork.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

HIST4035. History applied: Internship in historical studies (6 credits)

This capstone course allows students to apply historical thinking in the community. Under the supervision of the course coordinator students select from among a wide variety of partner institutions, organizations, associations, businesses and others, and embark upon the collaborative challenge of uncovering their past. Instead of simply requiring students to work for specified hours at ‘historical sites’ (museums, archives, etc) the course requires them to use the research techniques and methodological approaches they have learned in the discipline to construct and present a history of their selected community partners. They build preparatory research into polished consultancy papers detailing key findings about the partner, their development over time, and the passions and preoccupations of the individuals who have played an especially prominent role in their development. The course provides History students with a unique opportunity to design, plan and present creative contributions to historical knowledge and to engage with community members in discussions about the value and potential uses of history in the present. During the internship, students prepare and present their research-based consultancy paper. They also write a journal critically detailing their own initial expectations and reflecting upon the actual experience of conducting research, communicating their findings and putting history to use.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

(4) All MA students are required to complete the following MA dissertation.

HIST7999. Capstone Experience: MA Dissertation in Hong Kong History (12 credits)

Students in this course will produce a written dissertation (10,000 words) based on research into a selected topic in Hong Kong history. They will apply advanced methods of scholarly research to this topic; demonstrate knowledge of historical theory and methodology; show original thinking in presenting a scholarly argument about their topic; and master professional practices and standards of historical writing, use of sources, and presentation.

Assessment: 100% coursework.