We address the big questions about our past that can only be answered through studying Archaeology.

Department of Archaeology
"We're lucky to have so much history on our doorstep and the Department has such fantastic opportunities to take part in new and exciting research. The University is so supportive and everyone is friendly and welcoming. I never want to leave!"

Katrina
BA Heritage Studies
2nd year
WELCOME TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY

At York, we are proud to be at the forefront of archaeological research and teaching. Our range of interests and expertise covers human history from prehistory to the present. In recognition of our leading role as a centre of excellence and innovation in teaching and research, our Department was awarded the Queen’s Anniversary Prize in 2011. The Department is ranked in the top ten of the university league tables, we were fourth in the recent REF (Research Excellence Framework) exercise, and are consistently high in the National Student Survey, reflecting overall student satisfaction.

As a place to study, you will find nowhere better than York, with the city’s rich heritage and archaeology including remains and standing buildings from the Roman, Viking, Medieval, Georgian and Victorian periods on our doorstep. Our strong links with historic museums, visitor attractions, archaeological resources and professional expertise will enable you to make the most of your stay here.

As part of your first year of study at York, you will participate in a field-based archaeological excavation or heritage project within the Yorkshire region. Some examples of recent and current ‘field-school’ projects are included in this booklet.

Whichever archaeology degree you choose at York, you will find it is broad-based, covering the humanities, sciences and social sciences. During your degree you will acquire a range of transferable skills which are highly valued by employers within and beyond the heritage sector. Our teaching staff are friendly, approachable and down-to-earth, and within our Department there is a very strong sense of community.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Department, and in the meantime please get in touch if we can help in any way.

John Schofield, Head of Department

Archaeology is the study of the human past. It addresses big questions about our past that cannot be answered in other ways.

As archaeologists we are interested in all aspects of the people of the past; from their diets and their beliefs, to the clothes and jewellery they wore, the tools and cooking pots they used, the houses they lived in and the ways they commemorated their dead. Many of our ideas about who we are and where we belong are formed with reference to the past. Archaeology is crucially also therefore about the future.
TEN REASONS TO STUDY ARCHAEOLOGY AT YORK

- We are a top ten Archaeology department in all published university guides.

- York is the UK’s archaeological capital; a vibrant historic city with a wealth of above and below ground archaeology, from the Roman period to the modern day.

- We are well known as a centre of teaching excellence and have outstanding student satisfaction scores. We have been ranked consistently high in the National Student Survey.

- We are recognised as a vibrant and world-leading research community and are ranked fourth in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF).

- There are plenty of opportunities for you to participate in field-based projects on campus, in York and in the surrounding region as part of your studies.

- Our focus on small group teaching and individualised feedback helps you to develop both your intellectual and practical skills.

- You will become part of our friendly community, which is based at King’s Manor, a beautiful medieval building in the centre of the city of York. There are brand new scientific laboratories for Bioarchaeology in the Environment Building.

- Our friendly, down-to-earth and approachable teaching staff with help you get the most out of your archaeology degree and pursue your chosen career.

- The city of York offers a wide range of professional volunteering and employment opportunities at institutions such as the York Archaeological Trust, the Council for British Archaeology, Historic England and the Archaeology Data Service.

- You will develop a range of transferable skills which are highly valued by employers, opening the door to a wide variety of occupations both within and beyond the heritage sector.

“Personally I love the variety. I can go from studying complex theories of agency one day to GIS another and ancient DNA the next. The Department clearly prides itself on the quality of its teaching and responds to feedback from students. The lecturers and seminar leaders are all very knowledgeable and enthusiastic.”

Dan
BA Archaeology
1st Year
HOW DO PAST EVENTS AFFECT THE FUTURE?

Students at the King’s Manor, the home of the Department of Archaeology. The King’s Manor is a medieval building in the centre of the historic city of York, located between York Minster and the Yorkshire Museum.
York is one of Europe’s most fascinating historic cities. It has provided the backdrop to major political events throughout its two millennia of existence and is among the best cities in the UK to study or work as an archaeologist or heritage professional.

The city was founded by the Romans in 71 AD, as ‘Eboracum’. Following the Roman retreat, York, or ‘Eoforwic’, became a centre for Anglo-Saxon culture and learning. By the ninth century, ‘Jorvik’ was a flourishing centre of Anglo-Scandinavian trade, and the city continued to prosper throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods as the religious and political centre of power in northern England.

As a student at York, you will have access to some of the world’s best-preserved below-ground archaeology, revealed by important excavations of the 20th and 21st centuries, at sites such as Coppergate and Hungate. You will also have the opportunity to work with York’s stunning above-ground archaeology, including historic remains and buildings from the Roman, Viking, Georgian and Victorian periods, as well as the iconic York Minster, the largest Gothic cathedral in northern Europe. In addition to the city, the region boasts some of the world’s most significant prehistoric sites and some of the finest medieval abbeys, parish churches and country houses, on which staff and students also carry out cutting-edge research.

A number of archaeological units, museums, archives and heritage bodies are based in York, including the Council for British Archaeology, York Archaeological Trust, Historic England and the Archaeology Data Service. The city is also home to popular archaeological and historic tourist attractions such as the Jorvik Viking Centre, Dig and the City Walls. Being in York will open up volunteering, training and employment opportunities for you across the heritage sector.

The Department of Archaeology is based at the King’s Manor, a medieval building in the centre of York which was a focus of royal power in the 16th and 17th centuries, as headquarters of the Council for the North. It is only a stone’s throw from York Minster and a short trip from the University campus at Heslington.

“King’s Manor is an amazing place to study and the course fitted my interest in archaeological science. York is a wonderful place to live and has lots of history.”

Bethany
BSc Bioarchaeology
3rd year

“I really enjoyed the excavation in the first year. It was an opportunity to get your hands dirty and do something that actually contributes to the archaeological world.”

Oliver
BA Historical Archaeology
2nd year
York has England’s best preserved and longest stretch of city walls and beneath the medieval stonework lie the remains of earlier walls dating back to the Roman period.
A degree in Archaeology provides you with the subject knowledge required to pursue a career in the heritage sector. Our graduates are well represented in many organisations concerned with archaeology and heritage in the UK, such as Historic England, Historic Scotland, the National Trust, York Archaeological Trust, York Museums Trust, the British Museum and numerous public and private heritage bodies. Archaeology is also an excellent subject for acquiring transferable skills which are highly valued by employers, regardless of your eventual career. Beyond what Archaeology teaches you about the past and its significance in the present, all of our degrees allow you to develop skills in the arts and humanities, social sciences and hard sciences alike.

Through studying Archaeology you will gain other valuable skills, such as how to communicate your ideas effectively, carry out independent research, give professional presentations and think critically. You will also gain extensive experience in IT, teamwork, leadership and project management.

**Career opportunities**

As well as the heritage sector, our graduates have gone on to pursue a wide variety of careers including:

- Publishing and media
- Local government and development (planning and consultancy)
- Chartered surveying, land and environmental management
- Teaching and education
- Civil service, law and police authorities
- Accountancy and financial services
- Computing and IT services
- Business and administration
- Marketing and public relations.

**Further study and research**

Many of our students go on to further academic education, some studying for a masters degree to focus on more specific areas of archaeology while others pursue further degrees in cognate subjects, a postgraduate certificate or diploma in teaching, law or other professional training. Some go on to take PhD degrees and continue on to a career in research and higher education.

We take the future of all our students very seriously. Throughout your degree you will receive careers advice and training, and be provided with a range of volunteering opportunities, workshops and one-to-one advice about seeking and finding employment when you graduate.

Students have access to first class laboratories for teaching and independent study.

Students excavating at Star Carr
Our Graduates & Their Careers

“I work in an auction house as a watch specialist. My time at York taught me to record artefacts, produce accurate catalogues and pay attention to detail, as well as to work well as an individual and in a team, and to value personal research and development – all skills which enabled me to get a job that I enjoy.”

Phil Showell
Watch Specialist, Fellows Auctions
BA Archaeology
2012

“I left York in 2012 with a 2:1 in Historical Archaeology after three wonderful years as a mature student. I began working for English Heritage in March 2013 and became a Site Manager in April 2014. I now manage Middleham Castle in North Yorkshire, which is closely associated with King Richard III. We get thousands of visitors every year and it is a very popular site, especially since Richard’s remains were found. My years at York gave me the confidence to progress within English Heritage. I would recommend a career in English Heritage because they really look after their staff, the training is excellent and the sites we work on are truly inspirational.”

Gill Savage
Manager, Middleham Castle, English Heritage
BA Historical Archaeology
2012

“Archeology students are in a unique position for developing a broadly applicable skillset which can be taken in almost every direction as a graduate. Historic York, with its attentive and nurturing department is the perfect place to begin a successful career in almost any field.”

Rose Allan
Trainee solicitor, Baker and McKenzie
BA Archaeology
2014

“I finished my BA in Archaeology at York in 2004 and worked first as a research assistant to the Chief Executive of English Heritage and then as a researcher for the new Visitor Centre at the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich. Both appointments allowed me to use the skills I had learnt at York and contribute to lectures, publications and an exhibition.

Two years later I returned to York to complete a Masters degree, followed by a collaborative PhD focusing on the development of the Harewood Estate in West Yorkshire. Though it was specific to a particular subject, the experience of completing a PhD also provided a number of transferable skills, including project management, communication and writing in a clear and concise way.

All of these experiences and skills are essential for my current role as a heritage consultant in a surveying practice. As part of the Town Planning department I provide conservation and design advice to clients working with the historic built environment. My research background in architectural and landscape history has been crucial in providing a knowledge base from which to draw upon in discussions with clients, local planning authorities and Historic England.”

Tim Tatliogu
Heritage Consultant, Monatgu Evans LLP
BA in Archaeology, 2004

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Archaeology is the study of the whole of the human past, from the earliest hominids to the 21st century. Archaeologists seek to understand past societies and their cultures, economics, beliefs and behaviour through the study of surviving material – the everyday ‘stuff’ left behind by people in the past.

We might consider long-term trends, like the evolution of humanity and the history of the environment, or conduct smaller scale work on a specific site or landscape, or on certain types of artefacts or buildings. We also like to think about broader conceptual questions, such as notions of identity, power and change in human societies, or technology, trade, artistic development, gender relationships and ideology. Whatever your background, if you have an interest in the past and the people who lived in it, archaeology is a great way to explore it.

Archaeologists use a wide range of material evidence to explore the issues that interest us. These can include artefacts such as tools and implements, weapons, pottery and personal adornments, as well as art and documentary sources, and architecture from both excavated and standing buildings. However, archaeologists are also interested in the intangible heritage of cultural traditions, dialects and oral histories of past and contemporary societies. Archaeologists use a range of methods to analyse the remains of the past. These include topographical survey, geophysics, excavation, buildings recording, scientific techniques such as the analysis of DNA and isotopes, archive sources such as maps and documents, and experimental archaeology.

Our research and the questions we ask overlap with many other subjects in both the sciences and the humanities, including history, art, economics, anthropology, sociology, psychology, philosophy, chemistry, biology, geology, geography and even literature. These approaches make archaeology inherently interdisciplinary. But archaeology is also unique, given its focus on material remains and what they can tell us about the human past.

Broadening your outlook

Studying archaeology gives you a broad view of people and societies, and a rigorous training in evaluating evidence and ideas. It encourages the development of creative and critical thinking, verbal and written communication, and a wealth of practical and managerial skills. It is a complex subject, and it is challenging, intriguing, satisfying and hugely enjoyable.

Students try their hand at traditional tool-making and craft techniques at the York Experimental Archaeology Research Centre, the Department’s own prehistoric campsite and outdoor workspace.

First-year students excavate at Breary Banks, a First World War training and prisoner of war camp in the Yorkshire Dales.
WHY SHOULD WE STUDY THE PAST?

Our students can study the legacy of human activity by surveying buildings and landscapes.
OUR DEGREE COURSES

At York, we offer five undergraduate degree programmes. All of them share a common first year. This introduces you to the wide range of periods and places studied by archaeologists and to a variety of archaeological methods and theories. During your first year, this includes:

- the history of archaeology
- the methods and approaches used by archaeologists
- an introduction to archaeological science
- the sites, evidence and materials we study in archaeology.

The Summer Term is mainly taken up with excavation and survey work, or a heritage project, near York.

After the first year you begin to specialise, selecting options from a range of modules depending on your chosen degree.

BA Archaeology
The BA in Archaeology allows you to explore the past and its people from a primarily humanities-based perspective, although all of our degree courses involve learning skills and techniques in both the sciences and the humanities. The BA in Archaeology offers you the widest range of module options to choose from, and you can follow your interests in any time period.

BSc Archaeology
The BSc in Archaeology emphasises scientific approaches to questions about the human past. It introduces students to a range of scientific techniques, including paleo-environmental and geomorphological analysis, human and animal osteology and technical and computing methods in archaeology. Our BSc students reconstruct past environments and explore issues such as climate change, the use of natural resources, health, human diet, evolution and our relationship with past landscapes. Like the BA, the BSc offers you a wide range of module options, and allows you to follow your interests across different time periods.

BA Historical Archaeology
Historical archaeology explores the material remains of periods of history for which texts and documents also survive, from ancient cultures like the Egyptians and Romans right through to the 21st century. Archaeology trains students in analysing material culture and documentary sources together to gain a more complete understanding of the past. IF you are thinking about studying history, but want to do something different and challenging which will make you stand out from the crowd, think about a degree in historical archaeology.

BSc Bioarchaeology
York is the only university to offer Bioarchaeology as a degree at undergraduate level. It is growing rapidly in popularity as Biology and Chemistry bring more exciting discoveries to archaeology. There are new developments happening in bioarchaeology all the time, and at York we have a big team working on different areas of bioarchaeological research and answering important archaeological questions. Our expertise includes human and animal bones, shells, plant remains, pottery residues and biomolecular analysis including isotopes, ancient DNA, proteins and lipids. Students studying bioarchaeology at York have the opportunity to explore these subjects in our new specialist laboratories on campus.

BA Archaeology and Heritage
York has long been known for its teaching and heritage studies at postgraduate level. We have built on that expertise to offer this programme for those who want to focus on the heritage sector. The BA Archaeology and Heritage includes instruction in the full range of cultural heritage, trains you in the theory and practice of heritage management and answers key questions about the past in the present. Why are certain places, objects or areas valued, and by whom? What happens when these values are not shared by everyone, or where they conflict? How is heritage protected, and why does it need to be? How are archaeological projects managed to best effect? And how do we present our findings and our sites to the wider public?

For more information on our degree courses and the modules you may wish to study please see:
www.york.ac.uk/archaeology/undergraduates.
Entry requirements
We welcome all enquiries from potential undergraduates.

Offers will be made following assessment of all aspects of a candidate’s UCAS application, including past academic performance, predicted grades, your reference and a personal statement. Lower grades may be considered from students who demonstrate a clear enthusiasm for and commitment to Archaeology. You are not required to have prior experience or involvement with local museums and heritage organisations, but such factors will be looked on favourably. We welcome applications from students with a wide range of qualifications, as well as mature and overseas students.

We meet students at University Open Days, and applicants to whom we have offered places are also encouraged to attend one of our departmental Visit Days. Dates can be found on the University website.

The University of York wants to ensure that no-one who has the potential to study here is put off from applying because of costs. Information about fees and financial support is available on our website at www.york.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/fees-funding.

We are happy to answer any queries that you may have, so please feel free to email or phone us and we will get back to you.

For more information about our available courses, offer levels, entry requirements and contact details of the admissions tutor and the Department, please contact:

- Tel: +44 (0)1904 323901
- Email: archaeology@york.ac.uk
- Website: www.york.ac.uk/archaeology

“I chose the BSc in Bioarchaeology because it offers a wide range of modules that allow for a wealth of discussion and debate, as well as the potential for original and innovative further research. This is especially exciting as the modules encompass in-depth study in areas such as isotope and molecular archaeology, subjects that are really interesting and challenging. As a mature student with a lot of responsibilities, the thing that really surprised me is the help I received from the Department, as well as lots of contact time with staff.”

Blessing
BSc Bioarchaeology
3rd year

“York offers one of the best regarded and diverse Archaeology degrees in the country and allowed me the option to pursue any aspect of the past that interests me.”

Jonathan
BA Archaeology
1st year

“York offers one of the best regarded and diverse Archaeology degrees in the country and allowed me the option to pursue any aspect of the past that interests me.”

Jonathan
BA Archaeology
1st year
At York we pride ourselves on the fact that the Department provides a supportive, friendly, enthusiastic atmosphere, which encourages our students to have confidence in themselves and achieve their potential.

Approachability is one of the distinctive qualities of the staff at York, and we believe that treating students as adults, in a relaxed but professional setting, is an important part of the educational experience that we offer.

Our staff know all our students individually and encourage them to make the most of their time at York.

We use a range of teaching methods which allows students to learn in different ways. These include formal lectures, but we also focus particularly on small group seminars, workshops, fieldwork and practical and hands-on sessions, feedback tutorials and personal supervision.

We also use a wide range of assessment methods to allow our students to capitalise on their individual strengths and develop new skills. These include exams, essays, group projects, practical tests, assessed seminars and lectures and independent research through your dissertation.

The King’s Manor has a vibrant academic and thriving student community. Our facilities include teaching rooms, practical and conservation laboratories, and a library. Our new Bioarchaeology facilities are situated on the Heslington campus near the main library, the Departments of Biology and Environment and other University resources, including the Borthwick Institute for Archives.

The King’s Manor also has a student common room, refectory, study space and is right at the heart of all the amenities of York.

“At York, we develop close working relationships with students during their three years with us. The result of this is that we see our students growing up, becoming more confident, and more aware of the world around them. They leave us better prepared not just for working in the 21st century, but also for living in it.”

Dr Steve Ashby

“The best things about teaching at York are the incredible mix of students, all from different arts and sciences backgrounds, that have come together in their enthusiasm for archaeology, plus the positive, supportive relationship we have between staff and students.”

Dr Michelle Alexander

“York is such a lovely city to work in, particularly for archaeologists because there are so many other archaeologists around. The presence in York of the Council for British Archaeology (which includes the Young Archaeologists Club), York Archaeological Trust and various museums and agencies means that there are all sorts of possibilities for doing interesting projects together.”

Professor Nicky Milner
WHAT IS THE VALUE OF OUR PAST?

York’s rich archaeological past and strong links with historic resources provide a wonderful backdrop for the study of archaeology.
Our curriculum engages fully with the internationally significant archaeological sites throughout York and Yorkshire, through field trips, site visits and practical fieldwork.

York archaeology students have access to an unrivalled array of significant archaeological and historical sites, buildings, monuments and museums. In the Summer Term of your first year you will undertake excavation and survey work or conduct a heritage project in the city or near York. Throughout your three years, further site visits, practical work and independent research allow you to take advantage of the rich archaeological heritage of the region.

York students often get their first practical experience through one of the Department’s excavations, which introduce you to real research in the field. Your three weeks of excavation and three weeks of post-excavation sessions are built into the curriculum, leaving your summers free to pursue further hands-on experience on your own if you wish. Where possible, we try to offer students a choice of sites, and our excavations are research projects devised and led by members of staff, rather than just training digs. Students get the chance to participate first-hand in discovering new and important archaeological findings which contribute significantly to the discipline.

Previous first-year digs have included the world-famous Mesolithic site of Star Carr, Anglo-Saxon settlements at Wharram Crossroads, the Roman and early-medieval site underneath the new university campus at Heslington East, the medieval and early modern manor house and landscape at Harewood, and a First World War training and prisoner of war camp at Breary Banks.

Study abroad and other opportunities

Undergraduates are also able to get involved with research on a range of other sites during vacations and as part of the Department’s research projects in the UK and abroad. These include multi-period landscape projects in the Mediterranean, East Africa and Southern Europe, Roman research on the city of York, as well as Anglo-Saxon and Viking fieldwork carried out in conjunction with the British Museum, and other collaborations with the Yorkshire Museum.

Students are also encouraged to consider applying for a place on the University’s Erasmus or worldwide exchange programmes, which provide the opportunity to spend up to a year studying at a partner university. They may also be interested in the range of other international opportunities offered under the Centre for Global Programmes such as volunteering projects and summer schools.

“I was very happy to be given the chance to go on excavation in Tanzania, as it was both a unique place to work in and an excellent way of gaining practical experience. Although I had always been interested in different African cultures, the fieldwork let me get more involved with African archaeology and helped me develop my own research for my dissertation. I have since gone on to do an MA focused on African art and archaeology, and hope to be back digging in Africa soon!”

Henriette
BA Archaeology
HOW DO PEOPLE AFFECT THEIR ENVIRONMENT?

Professor Nicky Milner excavates the preserved wooden platform at Star Carr, East Yorkshire, a site of extensive hunter-gatherer occupation on the edge of a lost prehistoric lake. Star Carr is world famous for providing new evidence for humans and their relationship with the environment after the Ice Age.

Photo courtesy of Guzelian Photography
WHY CHOOSE THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK?

In less than 50 years, York has powered its way to become one of the top universities in the UK – performing equally well on teaching and research quality measures.

The main campus is at Heslington on the edge of the historic city of York, where our colleges are set in an attractive lakeside setting. It is compact, easy to get around, and has a safe, friendly atmosphere.

As an archaeology student you will study at the King’s Manor and the state-of-the-art laboratories in the new Environment building. Both have unique learning and social environments and close communities of students.

We offer you:
- A very high-quality academic experience
- A commitment to enhancing your employability
- A strong reputation for student support
- A welcoming college system
- 24/7 student welfare support
- Affordable and plentiful accommodation, on campus or off
- A lively and stimulating environment
- A beautiful location in one of Europe’s finest cities, with easy access from anywhere
- New teaching and leisure facilities on the Heslington East campus, including a new sports village with pool
- New Environment Department building which houses BioArCh, our research group covering aspects of Biology, Archaeology and Chemistry.

For further information about the student life on campus visit www.york.ac.uk/study/student-life.

“King’s Manor is a lovely building to experience every day. York is also a great city to live in and the quality of teaching is fantastic.”
Josh
BA Archaeology
1st year
The new Environment building hosts our BioArch laboratories.
Join the world-leading Department of Archaeology at the University of York. With impressive credentials and a supportive atmosphere, our Department will provide you with a myriad of opportunities to develop your knowledge of archaeology and equip you with skills highly valued by potential employers.

For full details of all the courses available and information about the Department, please see our website at www.york.ac.uk/archaeology or the Undergraduate Prospectus at www.york.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/prospectus.

First year students at the end of a dig at Star Carr

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Admissions Tutor
Tel: +44 (0)1904 323901
Email: archaeology@york.ac.uk
Web: www.york.ac.uk/archaeology

Photographs by Ian Martindale, Iconphotomedia, Gazelian Photography, Colleen Morgan, University of York/Alex Holland