UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

MSc

Human Evolution

Study mode
Full-time
Part-time

Duration
12 months
24 months

Apply by: **28 August 2026**
Starts on: **21 September 2026**

About this course

It has taken 7 million years of struggle to make us 'human.' How did we get here and why? In our Human Evolution MSc you'll investigate the biological and behavioural changes that made us the species we call 'Homo sapiens'.

Introduction

Our MSc offers the unique opportunity to benefit from two institutions specialisms' as your programme will be delivered by University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University in collaboration.

Liverpool John Moores University will help you gain expertise in the human fossil record, ancient DNA / proteomics and Neanderthal archaeology / spatial analysis. You will benefit from dedicated laboratory facilities for osteological analyses and practical field training in the excavation and recording of human skeletal remains. Liverpool John Moores University's collaboration with The Poulton Trust will provide you with access to archaeological sites with burials and large skeletal collections for practical training.

University of Liverpool will provide you with expertise in the early archaeological records of Africa and Eurasia, archaeological and evolutionary theory, as well as ecological, environmental, and climate change modelling. We have dedicated facilities and support staff for undertaking materials analysis linked to experimental archaeology and 3D modelling. The Professor Elizabeth Slater Laboratories for Archaeological Science provide analytical tools including scanning electron

microscopy [SEM-EDX], a visualisation suite for 3D modelling of artefacts, and microscopes for use-wear analysis of stone tools.

Through the research-led teaching on our MSc you will be fully involved in the human evolution research community, and will learn about the latest theoretical orientations, methods, and discoveries.

Who is this course for?

This MSc is for graduates who have an undergraduate degree in Archaeology, Anthropology, Biology, or other related discipline and want to further investigate the biological and behavioural changes that made us *Homo sapiens*. Past practical experience will also be considered in lieu of achieving the required undergraduate degree (or grade) on a case-by-case basis.

What you'll learn

- Advanced practical and theoretical experience in the methods and practice of human evolution research
- Hands-on training in archaeological fieldwork, including excavation of human remains
- Knowledge of the human fossil record, ancient DNA, proteomics, Neanderthal archaeology and spatial analysis
- Insight into the early archaeological records of Africa and Eurasia, archaeological and evolutionary theory, as well as ecological, environmental, and climate change modelling
- To engage independently and critically with a significant body of data on the foundations of human evolutionary studies
- To communicate orally and in written work, and to evaluate critically the work and research of others
- Transferable skills in analysis, computing, and the scientific method which enhance employment prospects
- Knowledge of a wide range of perspectives, cultures, and practices, and benefits of variation and diversity within the human species

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Course content

Discover what you'll learn, what you'll study, and how you'll be taught and assessed.

Semester one

You will take 60 credits of required modules in semester one.

Modules

Compulsory modules	Credits
HUMAN VARIATION AND ADAPTATION: BIOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES (ALGY750)	15
PALAEOANTHROPOLOGY (ALGY751)	15
ANCIENT DNA AND PROTEOMICS (ALGY752)	15
ADVANCED OSTEOLOGY AND SKELETAL PATHOLOGY (ALGY753)	15

Programme details and modules listed are illustrative only and subject to change.

Semester two

You will take 45 credits of required modules and 15 credits of optional modules in semester two.

Modules

Compulsory modules	Credits
EXTRASOMATIC ADAPTATION: THE EVOLUTION OF MATERIAL CULTURE (ALGY757)	30
RESEARCH METHODS (ALGY755)	15

Optional modules	Credits
ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SKILLS (ALGY754)	15
DENTAL ANTHROPOLOGY (ALGY756)	15
DECIPHERING SYMBOLS: APPROACHES TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE EARLIEST SYMBOLIC BEHAVIOUR (ALGY761)	15

Programme details and modules listed are illustrative only and subject to change.

Final Project

You will undertake your dissertation over the summer vacation period.

Modules

Compulsory modules	Credits
ACE MA AND MSC DISSERTATION (ALGY600)	60

Programme details and modules listed are illustrative only and subject to change.

Teaching and assessment

How you'll learn

Your modules will be delivered through a combination of formal lectures, student-led seminars and extensive practical and workshop instruction. The focus will be on research-led teaching, and you will be offered practical classes in numerous sub-fields

The modules are designed to guide you to identify your own learning needs and the resources to address them. This will go on to prepare you for your research project, including planning of research, research design, time management, ethics, and health and safety.

How you're assessed

The MSc in Human Evolution uses a wide range of assessment methods, including coursework (critiques, reports, research design, professional reports, and essays), tests, and oral presentations (group and individual).

Assessment elements are regularly structured for you to benefit from the feedback that they provide. Formative assessments include bi-weekly quizzes embedded in the first semester module Advanced Osteology and Skeletal Pathology, to help you transition from undergraduate to postgraduate learning.

The MSc focuses on authentic assessment via tasks such as fieldwork and lithic reports. Through studying the diversity of human societies, you will develop a truly global perspective.

Liverpool Hallmarks

We have a distinctive approach to education, the Liverpool Curriculum Framework, which focuses on research-connected teaching, active learning, and authentic assessment to ensure our students graduate as digitally fluent and confident global citizens.

The Liverpool Curriculum framework sets out our distinctive approach to education. Our teaching staff support our students to develop academic knowledge, skills, and understanding alongside our **graduate attributes**:

- Digital fluency
- Confidence
- Global citizenship

Our curriculum is characterised by the three **Liverpool Hallmarks**:

- Research-connected teaching
- Active learning
- Authentic assessment

All this is underpinned by our core value of **inclusivity** and commitment to providing a curriculum that is accessible to all students.

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Careers and employability

Our MSc in Human Evolution will offer you the opportunity to learn a set of scientific skills useful in future careers in academia, in the private sector, or in associated scientific or heritage industries.

The core module, Research Methods, includes employability-focused topics such as; CV writing and applying for jobs, project logistics, communicating your work outside academia, creating websites, use of social media and grant applications.

All students will have their own personal supervisor, allowing for targeted conversations about research (e.g. dissertation research) and future employment.

Our Human Evolution MSc will help you to develop a skill set including data collection and statistical analysis, scientific writing, public presentations, and working as a team, which will be valuable for many careers.

With an MSc in Human Evolution, you may choose to go on to a PhD programme in a more specific area of the Life Sciences, or pursue a career in the following areas:

- natural and social sciences
- cognition and psychology
- genetics
- forensic science
- archaeological science
- zoology
- primatology
- animal husbandry
- veterinary science
- museum management
- academic research

You will also be eligible to gain employment in:

- teaching
- the civil service
- science communication and science policy through governmental and non-governmental organisations, including journalism
- field and laboratory science-related roles across a range of employment sectors.

Career support from day one to graduation and beyond

Career planning

From education to employment

Networking events

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Fees and funding

Your tuition fees, funding your studies, and other costs to consider.

Tuition fees

UK fees (applies to Channel Islands, Isle of Man and Republic of Ireland)

Full-time place, per year - £12,500
Part-time place, per year - £6,250

International fees

Full-time place, per year - £28,000
Part-time place, per year - £14,000

Tuition fees are for the academic year 2026/27.

Tuition fees cover the cost of your teaching and assessment, operating facilities such as libraries, IT equipment, and access to academic and personal support.

- You can pay your tuition fees in instalments.
- All or part of your tuition fees can be funded by external sponsorship.
- International applicants who accept an offer of a place will need to pay a tuition fee deposit.

If you're a UK national, or have settled status in the UK, you may be eligible to apply for a Postgraduate Loan worth up to £12,167 to help with course fees and living costs. **Learn more about paying for your studies**.

Additional costs

We understand that budgeting for your time at university is important, and we want to make sure you understand any course-related costs that are not covered by your tuition fee. This could include buying a laptop, books, or stationery.

Find out more about the additional study costs that may apply to this course.

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Entry requirements

The qualifications and exam results you'll need to apply for this course.

Postgraduate entry requirements

We accept a 2:2 honours degree from a UK university, or an equivalent academic qualification from a similar non-UK institution. This degree should be in Archaeology, Anthropology, Biology or a closely related subject.

Past practical experience will also be considered as an alternative, on a case-by-case basis.

International qualifications

Select your country or region to view specific entry requirements.

Many countries have a different education system to that of the UK, meaning your qualifications may not meet our entry requirements. Completing your Foundation Certificate, such as that offered by the University of Liverpool International College, means you're guaranteed a place on your chosen course.

English language requirements

You'll need to demonstrate competence in the use of English language, unless you're from a majority English speaking country.

We accept a variety of international language tests and country-specific qualifications.

International applicants who do not meet the minimum required standard of English language can complete one of our Pre-Sessional English courses to achieve the required level.

IELTS

6.5 overall, with no component below 6.0

TOEFL iBT

88 overall, with minimum scores of listening 21, writing 21, reading 22, speaking 23. . TOEFL Home Edition not accepted.

Duolingo English Test

125 overall, with writing not less than 125, speaking and reading not less than 115, and listening not below 110. For academic year 2025/26 only, we will also accept the production, literacy, comprehension and conversation score set: 120 overall, with no component below 105.

Pre-sessional English

Do you need to complete a Pre-sessional English course to meet the English language requirements for this course?

The length of Pre-sessional English course you'll need to take depends on your current level of English language ability.

Pre-sessional English in detail

If you don't meet our English language requirements, we can use your most recent IELTS score, or the equivalent score in selected other English language tests, to determine the length of Pre-sessional English course you require.

Use the table below to check the course length you're likely to require for your current English language ability and see whether the course is available on campus or online.

Your most recent IELTS score	Pre-sessional English course length	On campus or online
6.0 overall, with no component below 6.0	6 weeks	On campus

Your most recent IELTS score	Pre-sessional English course length	On campus or online
6.0 overall, with no component below 5.5	10 weeks	On campus and online options available
6.0 overall, with no more than one component below 5.5, and no component below 5.0	12 weeks	On campus and online options available
5.5 overall, with no more than one component below 5.5, and no component below 5.0	20 weeks	On campus
5.0 overall, with no more than one component below 5.0, and no component below 4.5	30 weeks	On campus
4.5 overall, with no more than one component below 4.5, and no component below 4.0	40 weeks	On campus

If you've completed an alternative English language test to IELTS, we may be able to use this to assess your English language ability and determine the Pre-sessional English course length you require.

Please see our guide to Pre-sessional English entry requirements for IELTS 6.5 overall, with no component below 6.0, for further details.

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