

**SUMMER  
2024  
WEEKS 1-3**



## Vikings in Britain

IEEL003

Credit Value	Delivery	Contact Hours Per module	Self-Directed Hours Per module	Total Hours Per module
5 UoL credit, 2.5 ECTS	On-campus	12-16	34-38	50

**Module Leader: James Davison**

*James is a PhD candidate at the University of Liverpool. His research centres on studying burial evidence in order to expand our concepts of gender in Anglo-Saxon period England.*

*Connections between English and Scandinavian cultures in the early medieval world have been an important aspect of James' research for several years.*

### Module Description

The Viking Age was a dynamic period in European history which brought new cultures into contact and which affected the formation of the modern nations of England, Wales and Scotland. Students will learn how to engage with different types of evidence from the Middle Ages including written sources, archaeological digs, sculpture and place names. They will learn about the differences between real vikings and media portrayals, and the origin of modern British identities.

## **Module Aims:**

To build students' confidence in understanding, discussing and communicating complex ideas, both in written and spoken language.

To develop skills in research, collaborative learning and in preparing and delivering a group presentation.

To provide an overview of Viking activity in Britain and its long term political and cultural impact.

## **Content**

The following topics will be considered on the module:

Sources for the study of Vikings

The beginning of the Viking Age

Vikings in the Northern and Western Isles

Vikings in England: Conquest and colonization

The Making of England

The Making of Scotland and Wales

The End of the Viking Age

## **Module Structure**

The module will be delivered over a three-week period in six two-hour sessions (four hours per week, total 12 hours contact time). The final 2 sessions will be for assessment.

Each session will take the form of a lecture followed by an interactive seminar or workshop. Students will have a number of opportunities to put what they are learning into practice with their classmates. Students will be expected to participate fully and actively throughout the sessions.

In addition, it is expected that students will spend 34-38 study hours outside of the classroom contact hours on activities including assigned reading, optional reading of areas of personal interest, homework tasks, web research and preparation for assessment. Students should be aware that in order to fully benefit from the face-to-face classroom sessions, they will need to have done the preparation work assigned beforehand

## **Teaching Methods**

The teaching approach can include the following:

Taught sessions

Small group working

Group discussions

Presentations

## **Assessment:**

Assessment will be by:

Written essay/reflection of 1000–1200 words (worth 100% of the overall mark)

Standard University policies apply with regard to late submission of assessments

## **Course Structure:**

The indicative schedule is as follows:

### **Session One:**

*The beginning of the Viking Age*

The course will begin with some general information about the module, including the aims and assessment. Then it moves on to consider records of the beginning of the Viking Age in Europe and the motives of viking raiders. Chronicle records of the first viking attacks will be analysed.

### **Session Two:**

*Vikings in the Northern and Western Isles*

Perhaps one of the first areas in Britain to be settled by vikings were the islands around Scotland. This session will consider how the surviving evidence sheds light of relations between vikings and the native peoples in these areas and the contribution that vikings have made to the identities of the islanders nowadays. Case studies of viking burials in Scotland will be considered for the evidence they shed on viking religion and culture.

### **Session Three:**

*Vikings in England: Conquest and colonisation*

In a short period from the 860s to the 870s vikings were able to bring most of the lands of England under their control. We will consider the reasons for their success. The evidence of viking sculpture in England will be analysed to give an insight into cultural contacts between England and Scandinavia in the Viking Age.

### **Session Four:**

*The Making of England*

One area of England called Wessex was able to escape the viking conquest and the expansion of this kingdom under Alfred the Great and his successors ultimately led to the formation of a united kingdom of England. As well as learning about this process of state formation, we will consider the economic impact of viking activity through the evidence of viking silver hoards.

### **Session Five:**

*The Making of Scotland and Wales*

In narratives of British identity, Scotland and Wales are often overlooked and yet these remain distinctive parts of the United Kingdom with their own languages and identities. The creation of these kingdoms influenced by the activities will be looked at through this lecture, as well as later saga narratives.

**Session Six:***The End of the Viking Age*

In this final session, students will consider the factors that led to the end of the Viking Age in medieval Europe.

**Learning Outcomes:**

On completion of this module, students will be able to:

Learning outcome	Assessment component which assesses this learning outcome
Better understand and communicate complex ideas in written language	Written essay/reflection
Research a topic and work collaboratively in this research to produce a written essay/reflection	Written essay/reflection
Demonstrate familiarity with a range of sources (historical, archaeological, onomastic) relating to viking activity in Britain	Written essay/reflection

**Skills:**

Key skills that will be developed:

Skill	How this skill is developed	Mode of assessment
Collaboration and Teamwork	Group discussions, activities and tasks in class & collaborative research	Written essay/reflection
Communication	Orally in group discussions, activities and tasks in class, in writing by production of assessed assignment	Written essay/reflection
Analytical skills	Lectures will identify methods used to analyse different types of evidence. Group discussion will allow students to critically evaluate	Written essay/reflection

	a range of primary sources for themselves	
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### Books, ebooks and websites:

The University Website at [www.liv.ac.uk/library](http://www.liv.ac.uk/library) provides access to many relevant books and electronic books, as well as academic journals and databases.

### Recommended Pre-Course Reading

Any of the following:

C. Batey and J. Graham-Campbell, *Viking Scotland: An Archaeological Survey*

(Edinburgh, 1998)

D. Hadley, *Vikings in England: Settlement, Society and Culture* (Manchester, 2010)

M. Redknap, *Vikings in Wales: An Archaeological Quest* (Cardiff, 2000)