

South Asia

The study of language gives unique access to the culture of a region, to its contemporary life and its historical civilization. Starting from this premise, South Asian Studies at SOAS are devoted to research and teaching in the languages, literatures, cinemas and cultures of the Indian subcontinent, with the aim of reaching better understanding of one of the most complex and significant areas of the world.

The teaching and research on South Asian Studies complements other disciplines, which include History, Religious Studies, Music, Art, Politics, and Anthropology, resulting in one of the largest centres of South Asian studies outside the subcontinent. Being located in a city which itself contains a virtual microcosm of South Asia brings incalculable benefits to our students.

Structure and assessment

Students take taught modules to the value of 120 credits per year – unless stated otherwise.

Minimum entry requirements

A-Levels: ABB (from three A-levels excluding General Studies).

IB: 33 points with 5/5/5 at Higher level.

See p160 for more on entry requirements, application assessment, Widening Participation and joint degrees.

English language requirement

Overall IELTS grade of 6.5 with 6.5 in writing and speaking and 6.0 in reading and listening. Visit www.soas.ac.uk/english-requirements for alternative acceptable qualifications.

Duration

Three years, or four years with year abroad.

Skills gained

A degree in South Asian Studies prepares you for a wide range of careers in a variety of sectors including marketing and publishing, non-governmental agencies, international political organisations, diplomacy, business, cultural organisations, embassies, public service, teaching, interpreting and translation.

Employers will be looking for highly skilled recruits. A language study programme does not just teach you a body of facts, but also a range of skills, for example:

- the practical skills of careful listening and acquiring languages
- the intellectual skills of examining and evaluating cultures and theories
- various transferable skills such as research, analytical, communication, teamwork, problem solving, time management and organisation skills

What do South Asia graduates do?

Climate Change Project Intern
Head of Business, Sales and Marketing
Hindi/Urdu Interpreter
News Correspondent
Nursing Activity Manager
Resettlement Expert
Terrorism Research Analyst
Trainee Solicitor

Employers include

Campaign Against Living Miserably
Doctors Without Borders
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
ITN
London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
Reuters
Save the Children International
United Nations High Commissioner
For Refugees (UNHCR)



Taught Programmes

- BA South Asian Studies (3 years)
- BA South Asian Studies (4 years)
- BA South Asian Studies and... (3 years)
- BA South Asian Studies and... (4 years)



More Information

www.soas.ac.uk/southasia



I've had a fascination with India since I was very young and at school I started to create South Asian inspired patterns and to teach myself Hindi. The course at SOAS allowed me to delve deeper into South Asian culture and the arts, take my Hindi to the next level, and also branch into the arts of the Middle East. I was provided with access to amazing resources from books to Bollywood films, and I developed a number of contacts through studying at SOAS, which I have maintained throughout my career. One of my artworks was used as the cover design for the SOAS Students' Union Handbook and I created a large wall mural in the university bar on the theme of tea and coffee traditions.

Lizzie Hobbs
Freelance Pattern Artist
BA South Asian Studies, 2012



BA South Asian Studies (3 years)

UCAS code: T300

This programme offers the broadest range of teaching in the UK and Europe on the languages, literatures and cultures of the principal countries of South Asia: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal. The degree is centred on language study, but includes a wide range of options, which allow the student to study South Asia through several different disciplines including social anthropology, art and archaeology, cinema, economics, geography, history, law, literature, music, politics and religion. The breadth of the School's expertise on South Asia makes BA South Asian Studies unique in the UK university system.

Structure

(Typical course content)

Year 1

- Bengali/Hindi/Sanskrit/Urdu module (30 credits)
- Introduction to South and South East Asia (15 credits)
- Introduction to the History of South Asia (30 credits)
- Decolonising Otherness (15 credits)
- Understanding Texts (15 credits)
- Languages of the World (15 credits)

Year 2

- South Asian Cultural Studies (15 credits)
- Introduction to Research (15 credits)
- A module on the cinema or literature of South Asia (30 credits)
- A progression from the language in year 1 (30 credits) OR a further module related to South Asia (30 credits)
- Further optional module (30 credits)

Year 3

- Independent Study Project in South Asian Studies (30 credits)
- A progression from the language in year 2 (30 credits) OR a further module related to South Asia (30 credits)
- Further optional module (60 credits)

Optional modules

In addition to the language and literature options listed below, the full range of optional modules currently available is detailed online: www.soas.ac.uk/southasia/programmes/basastud/

Elementary Level

- Bengali Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Hindi Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Sanskrit Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Urdu Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Introduction to Prakrit (15 credits)

- Punjabi Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Elementary Written Persian A & B (15 credits each)

Intermediate Level

- Bengali Language 2 (30 credits)
- Hindi Language 2 (30 credits)
- Readings in Contemporary Hindi (30 credits)
- Sanskrit Language 2 (30 credits)
- Urdu Language 2 (30 credits)
- Urdu Literacy (15 credits)
- Intermediate Pali (30 credits)
- Readings in Prakrit (15 credits)

Advanced Level

- Directed Readings in a South Asian Topic (15 credits)
- Hindi Language 3 (30 credits)
- Hindi Language 4 (30 credits)
- Literature & Colonialism in North India (15 credits)
- Narratives of Mobility in Contemporary Hindi Literature (15 credits)
- Sanskrit Texts on Yoga (30 credits)
- Sanskrit Poetry and Aesthetics (30 credits)
- Selected Texts from the Sanskrit Epic (30 credits)
- Directed Readings in Sanskrit (15 credits)

Languages and Cultures of South Asia

- Imagining Pakistan: Culture, Politics, Gender (15 credits)
- Framing Pakistan (15 credits)
- Society, Culture and Politics in Nepal (30 credits)
- South Asian Literature in English (15 credits)
- Extended Essay in South Asian Studies (15 credits)

BA South Asian Studies and... (3 years)

May be combined with

African Studies

Development Studies (year abroad) LT6X

Hebrew

History (year abroad) V1T3

History of Art/Archaeology (year abroad) V4T3

International Management (year abroad) TN3D

Linguistics (year abroad) TQ13

Middle Eastern Studies

Music (year abroad) T3W3

Persian

Politics (year abroad) TL23

Social Anthropology (year abroad) TL63

South East Asian Studies

Religions (year abroad) T3V6

Turkish

World Philosophies (year abroad) T440

Structure

(Typical course content)

Year 1

- Bengali/Hindi/Sanskrit/Urdu module (30 credits)
- Introduction to South and South East Asia (15 credits)
- Decolonising Otherness (15 credits)
- 60 credits in the second subject

Year 2

- South Asian Cultural Studies (15 credits)
- A progression from the language in year 1 (30 credits) OR a further module related to South Asia (30 credits)
- Further optional module (15 credits)
- 60 credits in the second subject

Year 3

- Independent Study Project in South Asian Studies (30 credits) OR a further module related to South Asia (30 credits)
- A progression from the language in year 2 (30 credits) OR a further module related to South Asia (30 credits)
- 60 credits in the second subject

Optional modules

In addition to the language and literature options listed below, the full range of optional modules currently available is detailed online: www.soas.ac.uk/southasia/programmes/basastud/

South Asian language modules

The list below indicates the pathway along which students can progress as they do their South Asian language modules. Students may not take more than one language module at elementary level in any given year.

Elementary Level

- Bengali Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Hindi Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Sanskrit Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Urdu Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Introduction to Prakrit (15 credits)
- Punjabi Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Elementary Written Persian A & B (15 credits each)

Intermediate Level

- Bengali Language 2 (30 credits)
- Hindi Language 2 (30 credits)
- Readings in Contemporary Hindi (30 credits)
- Sanskrit Language 2 (30 credits)
- Urdu Language 2 (15 credits)
- Urdu Literacy (30 credits)
- Intermediate Pali (30 credits)
- Readings in Prakrit (15 credits)

Advanced Level

- Directed Readings in a South Asian Topic (15 credits)
- Hindi Language 3 (30 credits)

- Hindi Language 4 (30 credits)
- Literature & Colonialism in North India (15 credits)
- Sanskrit Texts on Yoga (30 credits)
- Sanskrit Poetry and Aesthetics (30 credits)
- Selected Texts from the Sanskrit Epic (30 credits)
- Directed Readings in Sanskrit (15 credits)

Languages and Cultures of South Asia

- Cinema and Society in South Asia: History and Social Context (15 credits)
- Cinema and Society in South Asia: Key Issues (15 credits)
- Imagining Pakistan: Culture, Politics, Gender (15 credits)
- Society, Culture and Politics in Nepal (30 credits)
- Framing Pakistan (15 credits)
- South Asian Literature in English (30 credits)
- Queer Cinema in Asia (15 credits)
- Extended Essay in South Asian Studies (15 credits)

BA South Asian Studies (4 years)

UCAS code: T304

This 4-year degree focuses on the languages and cultures of South Asia. It includes the intensive study of a South Asia language (Bengali, Hindi, Sanskrit and Urdu) and a wide choice of optional modules in the related cultural fields of literature, art, performance, religion, and philosophy. We also offer exciting modules on the culture and society of South Asia, including unique modules in cinema, literature, art, music, religion, history, politics, law, economics and anthropology. Students spend their third year in South Asia where they immerse themselves in the cultures of the region and develop their fluency in their chosen language.



Structure

(Typical course content)

Year 1

- Bengali/Hindi/Sanskrit/Urdu module (30 credits)
- Introduction to South and South East Asia (15 credits)
- Decolonising Otherness (15 credits)
- 60 credits in the second subject

Year 2

- South Asian Cultural Studies (15 credits)
- A progression from the language in year 1 (30 credits)
- Further optional module in South Asian Literature or Film (15 credits)
- 60 credits in the second subject

Year 3

- Year Abroad in South Asia

Year 4

- Independent Study Project in South Asian Studies (30 credits) OR a further module related to South Asia (30 credits)
- A progression from the language of the year abroad (30 credits)
- 60 credits in the second subject

Optional modules

In addition to the language and literature options listed below, the full range of optional modules currently available is detailed online:

www.soas.ac.uk/southasia/programmes/basastudand4

Elementary Level

- Bengali Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Hindi Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Sanskrit Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Urdu Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Introduction to Prakrit (15 credits)
- Punjabi Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Elementary Written Persian A & B (15 credits each)

Intermediate Level

- Bengali Language 2 (30 credits)
- Hindi Language 2 (30 credits)
- Readings in Contemporary Hindi (30 credits)
- Sanskrit Language 2 (30 credits)
- Urdu Language 2 (30 credits)
- Urdu Literacy (30 credits)
- Intermediate Pali (30 credits)
- Readings in Prakrit (15 credits)
- Persian for Readers of Arabic Script (30 credits)

Advanced Level

- Directed Readings in a South Asian Topic (15 credits)
- Hindi Language 3 (30 credits)
- Hindi Language 4 (30 credits)
- Literature & Colonialism in North India (15 credits)
- Narratives of Mobility in Contemporary Hindi Literature (15 credits)

- Sanskrit Texts on Yoga (30 credits)
- Sanskrit Poetry and Aesthetics (30 credits)
- Selected Texts from the Sanskrit Epic (30 credits)
- Directed Readings in Sanskrit (15 credits)
- Directed Readings in Urdu (15 credits)

Languages and Cultures of South Asia

- Cinema and Society in South Asia: History and Social Context (15 credits)
- Cinema and Society in South Asia: Key Issues (15 credits)
- South Asian Literature in English (15 credits)
- Imagining Pakistan: Culture, Politics, Gender (15 credits)
- Framing Pakistan (15 credits)
- Extended Essay in South Asian Studies (15 credits)

BA South Asian Studies and... (4 years)

May be combined with

[African Studies](#)

[Development Studies \(year abroad\)](#)

[Hebrew](#)

[History \(year abroad\)](#)

[History of Art/Archaeology \(year abroad\)](#)

[International Management \(year abroad\)](#)

[Linguistics \(year abroad\)](#)

[Middle Eastern Studies](#)

[Music \(year abroad\)](#)

[Persian](#)

[Politics \(year abroad\)](#)

[Social Anthropology \(year abroad\)](#)

[South East Asian Studies](#)

[Religions \(year abroad\)](#)

[Turkish](#)

[World Philosophies \(year abroad\)](#)

Structure

(Typical course content)

Year 1

- Bengali/Hindi/Sanskrit/Urdu Module (30 credits)
- Introduction to South and South East Asia (15 credits)
- Decolonising Otherness (15 credits)
- 60 credits in the second subject

Year 2

- South Asian Cultural Studies (15 credits)
- A progression from the language in year 1 (30 credits)
- Further optional module in South Asian Literature or Film (15 credits)
- 60 credits in the second subject





Year 3

- Year Abroad in South Asia

Year 4

- Independent Study Project in South Asian Studies (30 credits) OR a further module related to South Asia (30 credits)
- A progression from the language of the year abroad (30 credits)
- 60 credits in the second subject

Optional modules

In addition to the language and literature options listed below, the full range of optional modules currently available is detailed online: www.soas.ac.uk/southasia/programmes/basastudand4/

Elementary Level

- Bengali Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Hindi Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Sanskrit Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Urdu Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Introduction to Prakrit (15 credits)
- Punjabi Language 1A & 1B (15 credits each)
- Elementary Written Persian A & B (15 credits each)

Intermediate Level

- Bengali Language 2 (30 credits)
- Hindi Language 2 (30 credits)
- Readings in Contemporary Hindi (30 credits)
- Sanskrit Language 2 (30 credits)
- Urdu Language 2 (30 credits)
- Urdu Literacy (15 credits)
- Intermediate Pali (30 credits)
- Readings in Prakrit (15 credits)
- Persian for Readers of Arabic Script (30 credits)

Advanced Level

- Directed Readings in a South Asian Topic (15 credits)
- Hindi Language 3 (30 credits)
- Hindi Language 4 (30 credits)
- Literature & Colonialism in North India (15 credits)
- Narratives of Mobility in Contemporary Hindi Literature (15 credits)
- Sanskrit Texts on Yoga (30 credits)
- Sanskrit Poetry and Aesthetics (30 credits)
- Selected Texts from the Sanskrit Epic (30 credits)
- Directed Readings in Sanskrit (15 credits)

Languages and Cultures of South Asia

- Cinema and Society in South Asia: History and Social Context (15 credits)
- Cinema and Society in South Asia: Key Issues (15 credits)
- Society, Culture and Politics in Nepal (30 credits)
- South Asian Literature in English (15 credits)
- Extended Essay in South Asian Studies (15 credits)
- Imagining Pakistan: Culture, Politics, Gender (15 credits)
- Framing Pakistan (15 credits)

Certificate in South Asian Studies

Duration

One year (full time) or two or three years (part time)

Minimum entry requirements

The minimum entry requirement is the ability to demonstrate the potential to study at undergraduate level. However, programmes may have their own specific requirements, such as, in the case of language-based studies, a proven ability to learn a language.

This certificate is equivalent to one year of the BA degree in South Asian Studies, and is designed for students who want to study South Asia but cannot commit themselves to a three-year degree programme.

More information

www.soas.ac.uk/certificates

How to apply:

Applications for undergraduate certificates and diplomas should be made directly to SOAS. Complete the online application at www.soas.ac.uk/certificates

Structure

The composition of the Certificate is flexible, but would typically be similar to that of the first year of BA South Asian Studies, consisting of a language module, the module Introduction to South Asia and two further modules on South Asian subjects from within the Department or elsewhere in the School. Individual programmes have to be approved by the Undergraduate Tutor or the Head of Department.

