University of Gdańsk

Subject card

Subject name and code	Methods in Historical Research, PG_00215470						
Field of study	Historical Games and Digital Heritage						
Date of commencement of studies	October 2027		Academic year of realisation of subject	2027/2028			
Education level	Master's studies		Subject group	Obligatory subject group in the field of study Subject group related to scientific research in the field of study			
Mode of study	full-time studies		Mode of delivery	at the university			
Year of study	1		Language of instruction	English			
Semester of study	1		ECTS credits	6.0			
Learning profile	academic		Assessment form	credit			
Conducting unit							
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor						
	Teachers						
Lesson types	Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
	Number of study hours	0.0	40.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40
	E-learning hours included: 0.0						
Learning activity and number of study hours	Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan		Participation in consultation hours		Self-study	SUM
	Number of study hours	40		40.0		70.0	150
Subject objectives	The course aims to develop competencies in historical research methodology, critical source analysis, scholarly argumentation, and independent research design in history, historical games, and digital heritage.						

Learning outcomes	Course outcome	Subject outcome	Method of verification
	[GHDCMU2_U01] Independently develops research project concepts concerning historical games or digital heritage, including the definition of the research problem, questions, or hypotheses, the selection of methods, and a rationale for the approach to interpreting and verifying the results.	Independently develops a research proposal concerning history, historical games, or digital heritage, defining the research problem and questions, selecting sources and methods, and justifying the procedures for analysing and validating findings.	[SU2] presentation/project/paper/ report [SU6] demonstration of practical skills
	[GHDCMU2_K04] Maintains professional ethics and standards of conduct in roles such as researcher, creator, or consultant, including the requirements for academic integrity and social sensitivity when working with historical and cultural material.	Adheres to the principles of research integrity and ethics in historical research by documenting source provenance, respecting copyright, and considering the social and cultural implications of interpretations of the past.	[SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SK2] presentation/project/paper/ report [SK8] observation of student's independent or team work
	[GHDCMU2_K01] Critically examines conclusions, interpretations, and assessments in light of authoritative sources, feedback, and the inherent limitations of own knowledge, while also incorporating expert opinions in cases that fall outside their own areas of expertise.	Critically reassesses and revises historical interpretations in response to new evidence, substantiated criticism, and expert feedback, recognising the limitations of personal knowledge and the research methods employed.	[SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SK2] presentation/project/paper/ report [SK8] observation of student's independent or team work
	[GHDCMU2_U02] Critically analyzes and synthesizes historical sources and scholarly literature to address complex research and creative problems, while taking into account the reliability and limitations of the material as well as competing interpretations.	Critically analyses historical sources and scholarly literature, assessing their authenticity, credibility, context, and limitations, and synthesises findings into evidence-based arguments that address competing interpretations.	[SU2] presentation/project/paper/ report [SU6] demonstration of practical skills
	[GHDCMU2_U07] Uses English in oral and written academic and professional communication at a level of at least B2+ (CEFR), incorporating specialized terminology related to history, game studies, and digital heritage.	Communicates in English in speech and writing at B2+ level or above.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SU2] presentation/project/paper/ report
	[GHDCMU2_W01] Critically examines theoretical and methodological approaches within historical research and historiography, taking into account their underlying premises, the principles of source criticism and assessment of source reliability, as well as debates over interpretation.	Compares selected theoretical and methodological approaches to historical research, explains their epistemological assumptions, and evaluates their relevance to source interpretation, historical explanation, and historiographical debates.	[SW5] implementation of a problem task

Subject contents

1. **Historical inquiry and its limits** – evidence, interpretation, historical explanation and the epistemology of the past.
2. **Research design** – research questions, hypotheses, methodological choices and source selection.
3. **Historical source criticism** – provenance, authenticity, credibility, contextualisation and conflicting evidence.
4. **Methods of historical interpretation** – comparison, causation, contingency and counterfactual reasoning.
5. **Critical reading of scholarship** – historiographical debates, theoretical assumptions, logical fallacies and competing interpretations.
6. **Digital research literacy** – archival databases, source triangulation, lateral reading and verification of AI-generated claims.
7. **Games and digital heritage as research material** – methodological challenges of analysing interactive and digital sources.
8. **From evidence to argument** – constructing scholarly arguments, peer review, academic debate and critical revision.

Prerequisites and co-requisites

Assessment methods and criteria

Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
Historical source & argument analysis	51.0%	60.0%
Historical research proposal	51.0%	30.0%
Active participation	90.0%	10.0%

Recommended reading

Basic literature

Tosh, J. (2021). *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of History*. 7th ed. Routledge.

Schrag, Z. M. (2021). *The Princeton Guide to Historical Research*. Princeton University Press.

Howell, M. C. and Prevenier, W. (2001). *From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods*. Cornell University Press.

Wallace, M. and Wray, A. (2021). *Critical Reading and Writing for Postgraduates*. 4th ed. SAGE Publications.

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., Williams, J. M., Bizup, J. and FitzGerald, W. T. (2024). *The Craft of Research*. 5th ed. University of Chicago Press.

Wright, E., Donald, I. and Webber, N. (eds) (2026). *Writing Game Histories*. Bloomsbury Academic.

Topolski, J. (1996). Jak się pisze i rozumie historię. Tajemnice narracji h

	Supplementary literature	Gaddis, J. L. (2002). *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past*. Oxford University Press. Fischer, D. H. (1970). *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought*. Harper & Row. Wineburg, S. (2001). *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past*. Temple University Press. Caulfield, M. and Wineburg, S. (2023). *Verified: How to Think Straight, Get Duped Less, and Make Better Decisions about What to Believe Online*. University of Chicago Press. Toulmin, S. E. (2003). *The Uses of Argument*. Updated ed. Cambridge University Press. Chapman, A. (2016). *Digital Games as History: How Videogames Represent the Past and Offer Access to Historical Practice*. Routledge.
	eResources addresses	
Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed	**Historical source and argument analysis.** Select a historical source and compare how it is used in two scholarly studies. Assess its authenticity, reliability and limitations. Which claims are supported by the source, and which require further evidence? Justify your own interpretation in relation to both authors' arguments. **Historical research proposal.** Develop a brief proposal for a study on history, historical games or digital heritage. Define the research problem and question, select suitable sources and methods, and explain how you will analyse the material and assess whether it supports your conclusions. After discussing your proposal, identify one change you would make in response to feedback.	
Work placement	Not applicable	

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