University of Gdańsk

Subject card

Subject name and code	Methods in Historical Research, PG_00216098						
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	4.0			
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		30.0		30.0	100
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_U07] Uses English at a level of at least B2+ of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in spoken and written communication in academic and professional contexts, employing specialist terminology from history, game studies and digital heritage.	Uses English at a minimum of B2+ in academic communication, applying specialist terminology from historical research methodology, source criticism and historiography when analysing scholarly literature, presenting research findings and participating in academic discussions." Assessment: an English-language research presentation, participation in discussion and written work using specialist terminology.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SU2] presentation/project/paper/ report
	[GHDCMU2_K01] Is prepared to critically assess their own knowledge, beliefs and interpretations, as well as information received, in light of available evidence and feedback, and to recognise the importance of specialist knowledge and seek expert advice when facing difficulties in independently addressing cognitive and practical problems.	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_K04] Is prepared to responsibly fulfil professional roles as a researcher, creator or consultant, to uphold and promote the principles of professional ethics, and to require others to adhere to them, while maintaining academic integrity, professional standards of conduct and social sensitivity when working with historical and cultural materials.	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_W01] Has an in-depth knowledge and understanding of theoretical and methodological approaches in historical research and historiography, including their underlying assumptions, principles of source criticism and assessment of source reliability, major debates over historical interpretation, and contemporary developments in historical research, taking into account their connections with cultural and religious studies and communication and media studies.	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
	[GHDCMU2_U01] Independently develops research project concepts addressing complex problems in history, particularly its interpretation and representation in historical games and digital heritage, defining research problems and questions, formulating and testing hypotheses, selecting appropriate research methods, and justifying approaches to the interpretation and verification of results.	Independently develops a research proposal on history, historical games or digital heritage, defines the problem and research questions, formulates hypotheses, selects appropriate sources and methods, and justifies how the material will be analysed, the hypotheses tested and the results interpreted.	[SU2] presentation/project/paper/ report [SU6] demonstration of practical skills
	[GHDCMU2_U02] Critically analyses and synthesises information from historical sources and scholarly literature to address complex research and creative problems, taking into account the reliability and limitations of the materials used, 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

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	No extra requirements.

Assessment methods and criteria

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

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. Nyegaard, N., Nyvang, C., Koegeler-Abdi, M., Meier, M., & Vallgårda, K. (2026). Ethics in history: introducing conceptual tools for research practices. *Rethinking History*, 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/13642529.2026.2728494
	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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