1. **Title of the module**

HIST4410 (HI441) A Tale of Two Kings: Charlemagne and Alfred

1. **School or partner institution which will be responsible for management of the module**

School of History

1. **The level of the module (Level 4, Level 5, Level 6 or Level 7)**

Level 4

1. **The number of credits and the ECTS value which the module represents**

15 credits (7.5 ECTS)

1. **Which term(s) the module is to be taught in (or other teaching pattern)**

Spring term

1. **Prerequisite and co-requisite modules**

None

1. **The programmes of study to which the module contributes**

BA (Hons) History and associated joint honours programmes.

1. **The intended subject specific learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module students will be able to:**

8.1) demonstrate an understanding of the major political, social and cultural developments in Carolingian Francia and Anglo-Saxon England in the period c.750–c.900.

8.2) apply different methodological techniques to the analysis of primary sources from this period.

8.3) demonstrate an awareness of the problems and possibilities of comparative history as it relates to the example of Charlemagne and Alfred.

8.4) evaluate historiographical approaches to royal government and the state in the early Middle Ages.

1. **The intended generic learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module students will be able to:**

9.1) formulate and express arguments clearly in writing with the support of both primary sources and secondary literature.

9.2) manage their own learning by carrying out independent research and seeking out research materials.

9.3) employ different types of evidence and intellectual concepts in order to identify solutions to historical problems.

9.4) express arguments, interpretations and ideas orally and demonstrate strong communication skills.

1. **A synopsis of the curriculum**

Charles the Great (Charlemagne), king of the Franks (768–814), has been called ‘the father of Europe’, while Alfred the Great, king of Wessex (871–99), has been viewed as a key figure in the emergence of a united England. But what made Charles and Alfred ‘great’? This module examines and compares the achievements of these two rulers in order to cast light on broader political, cultural and social developments in the Frankish empire and Anglo-Saxon England. Both Charlemagne and Alfred oversaw sweeping programmes of reform which attempted to bring order to all spheres of life. These drives for order produced an outpouring of writing, offering the historian unparalleled views of early medieval government and intellectual culture. However, some have suggested that the towering reputations of Charlemagne and Alfred owe more to their employment of intellectuals and propagandists to portray their militaristic regimes as pious, civilised and ordered. Indeed, the fame of both kings today rests to a large degree on the survival of two remarkable royal biographies: Einhard’s *Life of Charlemagne* and Asser’s *Life of Alfred*. Using these two texts as baselines, we shall examine the rich sources of the period – narrative, documentary, literary, artistic, archaeological – in order to test the biographers’ claims. How did Charlemagne and Alfred rule? In what ways were the challenges they faced similar and different? Why did they promote education and literacy? Did their reforms actually change anything on the ground? Can we ever know anything about the ‘real’ Charlemagne or Alfred? By considering such questions, students will gain firm understandings of the evidence for and debates over royal government and political order in ninth-century Europe.

1. **Reading list (Indicative list, current at time of publication. Reading lists will be published annually)**

Abels, R. (1998). *Alfred the Great: War, Kingship and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England*. Routledge: London.

Costambeys, M., Innes, M., and MacLean, S. (2011). *The Carolingian World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Keynes, S. and Lapidge, M., eds and trans. (1983). *Alfred the Great: Asser’s Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources*. Penguin: London.

McKitterick, R.., ed. (1995). *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Vol 2: c.700–c.900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nelson, J. L. (2009). ‘Britain, Ireland, and Europe, c.750–c.900’. In: P. Stafford, ed., *A Companion to the Early Middle Ages: Britain and Ireland, c.500–c.1100*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 231-48.

Story, J., ed. (2005). *Charlemagne: Empire and Society*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

1. **Learning and teaching methods**

Total contact hours: 20

Total independent study hours: 130

Total study hours: 150

1. **Assessment methods**
   1. Main assessment methods

60% Coursework, 40% Exam

The coursework component will consist of:

* Essay 1 (2,000 words) 25%
* Essay 2 (2,000 words) 25%
* Seminar Participation 10%

The exam component will consist of:

* Exam (2 hours) 40%
  1. Reassessment methods

100% coursework (2,000-word essay)

1. **Map of module learning outcomes (sections 8 & 9) to learning and teaching methods (section 12) and methods of assessment (section 13)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Module learning outcome** | *8.1* | *8.2* | *8.3* | *8.4* | *9.1* | *9.2* | *9.3* | *9.4* |  |  |  |  |
| **Learning/ teaching method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Private Study | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lecture | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Seminar | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Assessment method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Examination | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Essays | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Seminar Participation | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |

1. **Inclusive module design**

The School recognises and has embedded the expectations of current equality legislation, by ensuring that the module is as accessible as possible by design. Additional alternative arrangements for students with Inclusive Learning Plans (ILPs)/ declared disabilities will be made on an individual basis, in consultation with the relevant policies and support services.

The inclusive practices in the guidance have been considered in order to support all students in the following areas:

a) Accessible resources and curriculum

b) Learning, teaching and assessment methods

1. **Campus(es) or centre(s) where module will be delivered**

Canterbury

1. **Internationalisation**

With its emphasis on political and cultural developments in England and continental Europe in the Middle Ages (as stated in LO 8.1), this module is inherently international in outlook. By approaching the study of early medieval England from a European perspective, students will be able to apply the skills and insights they gain from a comparative study in subsequent modules.

**FACULTIES SUPPORT OFFICE USE ONLY**

**Revision record – all revisions must be recorded in the grid and full details of the change retained in the appropriate committee records.**

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| Date approved | Major/minor revision | Start date of the delivery of revised version | Section revised | Impacts PLOs (Q6&7 cover sheet) |
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