

Programme Specification

Creative Writing (2020-21)

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

Awarding Institution	University of Southampton
Teaching Institution	University of Southampton
Mode of Study	Full-time
Duration in years	1
Accreditation details	None
Final award	Master of Arts (MA)
Name of award	Creative Writing
Interim Exit awards	Postgraduate Certificate Postgraduate Diploma
FHEQ level of final award	Level 7
UCAS code	
Programme code	4269
QAA Subject Benchmark or other external reference	Master's Degree Characteristics 2016
Programme Lead	Carole Burns

Programme Overview

Brief outline of the programme

The Creative Writing MA at Southampton is a challenging and stimulating programme allowing you to focus on four exciting areas of contemporary writing – writing for young people, international fiction, scriptwriting, and poetics. Our dedicated team of staff will use weekly workshops, seminars, and individual tuition to help you develop your voice. You will have the opportunity to publish and edit an anthology, to take part in a literary festival, and to pursue creative collaborations with everyone from scientists to visiting actors. Your fellow students will come from all over the world and bring with them a wide range of experiences and writing traditions.

The University of Southampton is home to the Centre for Modern and Contemporary Writing, which hosts regular events, readings, and conferences. Recent visitors to the centre include Caroline Bergvall, Lavinia Greenlaw, Amitav Ghosh, Lee Harwood, and Christopher Ricks. Our own creative writing team includes novelists Aamer Hussein, Alison Fell, and Rebecca Smith, short story writer Carole Burns, poet Peter Middleton, and playwrights Evan Placey and Adam Brace. They look forward to working with you.

Our aim is to provide you with a supportive academic context in which to learn, grow and develop your writing skills. Our programme offers the chance to specialise in what interests you, to work in a friendly academic environment with other student writers, and to benefit from expert tuition and a dynamic schedule of visiting speakers which includes established writers, editors, publishers and agents. You will also choose from a variety of stimulating MA modules offered by the School of Humanities which will help you to think critically and in depth about what you do.

Your contact hours will vary depending on your module/option choices. Full information about contact hours is provided in individual module profiles.

Learning and teaching

You may be surprised by what you find out about yourself during this course. Experience has shown that students often come to us thinking they want to write prose and end up writing poetry, or vice versa, or discover a gift for scriptwriting or children's literature they never thought they had. This course will certainly challenge your preconceptions about yourself, so you should come prepared with an open mind. We don't promise to get you published outside of our own end-of-year anthology, but we do anticipate that by the end of the course you will have learned enough to make informed decisions about the directions your writing career might take next.

Teaching is conducted in small groups with one or more writing tutors guiding students through the implications and potentials of their own writing paths.

As well as the taught aspects of the course, you will have the opportunity to hear and meet invited writers and poets, publish your own anthology, organise your own reading series to promote your work, and initiate new projects and performances. You will be encouraged to use your creative initiative to the maximum and push literary and disciplinary boundaries as actively as possible both inside and outside the University.

Assessment

You will be assessed by the submission of a creative portfolio, creative work in fiction, scriptwriting, and the short story, and a series of critical commentaries which will encourage you to reflect on issues of genre, redrafting, creative influence, and voice. Your final Creative Project will allow you to develop your skills in a 15,000-word piece, where you will work closely with a supervisor in your chosen area. The project will be accompanied by a 3,000-4,000-word critical commentary, which will explore a key practice-based or research-led question raised by your creative work.

Special Features of the programme

N/A

Please note: As a research-led University, we undertake a continuous review of our programmes to ensure quality enhancement and to manage our resources. As a result, this programme may be revised during a student's period of registration; however, any revision will be balanced against the requirement that the student should receive the educational service expected. Please read our [Disclaimer](#) to see why, when and how changes may be made to a student's programme.

Programmes and major changes to programmes are approved through the University's [programme validation process](#) which is described in the University's [Quality handbook](#).

Educational Aims of the Programme

The aims of the programme are to: The programme is designed to equip you with a range of practical and intellectual skills to enable you to be a better creative writer:

The aims of the programme are to:

- develop your skills and confidence as a writer in specific genres of your choice
- encourage you to be critically self-aware and capable of a self-reflexive grasp of the creative process
- train you to be able to articulate in discussion and essays a critical analysis of your own and others creative work
- give you an understanding of the theoretical and conceptual issues involved in writing
- enable you to work independently and productively on extended pieces of writing
- provide the opportunity to explore a range of periods and genres of English literature and culture
- introduce you to performance writing and the range of international literatures in English

Programme Learning Outcomes

Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

Knowledge and Understanding

On successful completion of this programme you will have knowledge and understanding of:

- A1. how to write in a specific genre.
- A2. the creative process involved in the composition of literary writing.
- A3. methods of analysing creative writing.
- A4. theories of writing and literature.
- A5. contemporary literatures.
- A6. the possibilities available in international writing.
- A7. the significance of performance writing for poetry and prose.
- A8. reader response to literary writing.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Your knowledge and understanding are developed through seminars and the core workshop. In the workshop you will regularly present your own writing for constructive discussion with the entire group and will also be involved in developing skills in supportive critical reflection on the work of all the other students. This will be supported by one-to-one tutorial supervision. Seminars will be devoted to the study of specific fields and genres of contemporary writing as a context for creative work. You will be strongly encouraged to make use of the Library and Internet resources throughout the course and to extend your independent learning skills. Visits by writers will also form an integral part of the course.

Assessment Methods

The primary assessment method for testing your development as a writer on the Creative Writing modules will be a 4,000-6,000 word piece of creative writing accompanied by a 1,500 word critical commentary. You will discuss your plans for this submission in detail with your tutor. You will also take modules on modern literature for which the assessment will be determined by the English MA coursework involving essays, palaeographic, library, data retrieval and other exercises where appropriate, oral presentation, take-away examinations. To gain the full MA award, you will also need to complete an original piece of creative writing of around 15,000 words (or equivalent pages of poetry) that will demonstrate your grasp of the requirements of your chosen form and genre, the capacity to use language with a full awareness of its semantic, phonetic, and cultural implications, and a knowledge of contemporary literature and theories of writing. Alongside this you will offer a 3,000-4,000 word essay of critical self-reflection in which you analyse the creative decisions and contexts for the work.

Subject Specific Intellectual and Research Skills

On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

- B1. deal with complex creative issues in a systematic and analytic manner.
- B2. make literary judgements in an informed way.
- B3. independently evaluate and apply compositional methods.
- B4. demonstrate originality in writing.
- B5. successfully carry through to completion an independent writing project.
- B6. demonstrate linguistic skills necessary for producing writing at an advanced level.
- B7. interact with readers effectively via your writing.
- B8. present your writing discursively in both spoken and written forms.

Teaching and Learning Methods

These skills are acquired through seminars and student-centred learning experiences, such as oral presentations, group discussion of creative work, individual consultation, and through the extended process of self-aware revision guided by the pedagogic processes. Library and Web resources will be used throughout the course and you will be encouraged to read widely

Assessment Methods

Your thinking skills are tested through assessed creative and critical writing. The final creative project will test your acquisition of cognitive skills, taking you from the generation of ideas and their textual expression to the creation of well-structured pieces of writing capable of eliciting appropriate reader responses.

Transferable and Generic Skills

On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

- C1. write fluently in a range of styles.
- C2. present ideas effectively both orally and in written form.
- C3. revise and edit creative writing to a professional standard.
- C4. demonstrate interpersonal skills and be able to work with contested responses to a piece of writing to arrive at a considered judgement.
- C5. identify, select and utilise a wide range of printed and internet sources.
- C6. manage deadlines and make effective use of your time.
- C7. position your writing within a market or cultural context.
- C8. demonstrate self-confidence and self-awareness both in collaborative activities and independent study, as well as respect for the ideas and work of others.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Your key skills are developed through the programme's emphasis on active participation, independent learning, creativity, and personal initiative. You are expected to read widely, to experiment freely with your writing and composition beyond the parameters of individual modules. Your ability to take responsibility for your work is aided by activities such as the presentation of your writing to a group, assessments of creative work, essays, and the final project supported by one-to-one supervision. The final project will enable you to demonstrate your ability to use your initiative in developing an individual vision, realising it in textual form, and managing any problems that emerge along the way.

Assessment Methods

Your key skills are tested through assessed coursework involving creative and critical writing. The creative project constitutes the means by which the acquisition of Key Skills appropriate to the MA is distinguished from that of the Diploma.

Programme Structure

The programme structure table is below:

Information about pre and co-requisites is included in individual module profiles.

Where optional modules have been specified, the following is an indicative list of available optional modules, which are subject to change each academic year. Please note in some instances modules have limited spaces available.

Part I

The programme may be studied over one year (full-time) or two years (part-time). It consists of a core Creative Skills Workshop (one module, taught over two semesters), four core modules (students must choose at least two), option modules from other Humanities MA programmes, and a final creative project for those progressing to the MA. It is made up of 90 ECTS (180 CATS) (each taught module is 7.5 ECTS (15 CATS); creative skills workshop is 22.5 ECTS (45 CATS); creative project is 37.5 ECTS (75 CATS) (ECTS = European Credit Transfer Scheme; CATS = Credit Transfer and Accumulation Scheme).

The programme structure table is below. Information about pre and co-requisites is included in individual module profiles.

Part I Core Modules

You must choose two of the following four modules as Core:

ENGL6116 - Writing for Children and Young People 7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)

ENGL6117 - The Art and Craft of Fiction I 7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)

ENGL6115 - Scriptwriting 7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)

Those which are not taken as Core will be available as Option modules.

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
ENGL6137	Creative Project	30	Core
ENGL6136	Creative Skills Workshop	30	Core
ENGL6115	Scriptwriting	7.5	Optional/Core
ENGL6117	The Art and Craft of Fiction	7.5	Optional/Core
ENGL6116	Writing for Children and Young People	7.5	Optional/Core

Part I Subject Specific Optional Modules

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
ENGL6132	Adventures in Literary Research	15	Optional
ENGL6144	Approaches to Critical and Creative Concepts	15	Optional
ENGL6138	Approaches to Jane Austen	15	Optional
ENGL6134	Approaches to the Long Eighteenth Century	15	Optional
ENGL6130	Approaches to the Long Nineteenth Century (1789-1914)	15	Optional
ENGL6131	Approaches to the Long Twentieth Century (1914-Present)	15	Optional
ENGL6145	Communicating the Cultural Industries	15	Optional
ENGL6141	Fiction Before Austen	7.5	Optional
ENGL6139	Jane Austen and the Heritage Industry	15	Optional
ENGL6113	Jane Austen's Style	7.5	Optional
ENGL6142	Literary Industries and New Media	15	Optional
HUMA6015	Narrative Non-Fiction: The Interdisciplinary Art	7.5	Optional

HUMA6017	Remaking Rome	7.5	Optional
ENGL6126	Special Project (Text, Context, Intertext)	7.5	Optional
ENGL6146	Special Project (Text, Context, Intertext)	15	Optional
ENGL6128	Special Project (Text, Culture, Theory)	7.5	Optional
ENGL6147	Special Project (Text, Culture, Theory)	15	Optional
FILM6044	The Holocaust in American Film	7.5	Optional

Progression Requirements

The programme follows the University's regulations for [Progression, Determination and Classification of Results : Undergraduate and Integrated Masters Programmes](#) and [Progression, Determination and Classification of Results: Postgraduate Master's Programmes](#) Any exemptions or variations to the University regulations, approved by AQSC are located in [section VI of the University Calendar](#).

Support for student learning

There are facilities and services to support your learning some of which are accessible to students across the University and some of which will be geared more particularly to students in your particular Faculty or discipline area.

The University provides:

- library resources, including e-books, on-line journals and databases, which are comprehensive and up-to-date; together with assistance from Library staff to enable you to make the best use of these resources
- high speed access to online electronic learning resources on the Internet from dedicated PC Workstations onsite and from your own devices; laptops, smartphones and tablet PCs via the Eduroam wireless network. There is a wide range of application software available from the Student Public Workstations.
- computer accounts which will connect you to a number of learning technologies for example, the Blackboard virtual learning environment (which facilitates online learning and access to specific learning resources)
- standard ICT tools such as Email, secure filestore and calendars.
- access to key information through the MySouthampton Student Mobile Portal which delivers timetables, Module information, Locations, Tutor details, Library account, bus timetables etc. while you are on the move.
- IT support through a comprehensive website, telephone and online ticketed support and a dedicated helpdesk in the Hartley Library.
- Enabling Services offering support services and resources via a triage model to access crisis management, mental health support and counselling. Support includes daily Drop In at Highfield campus at 13.00 – 15.00 (Monday, Wednesday and Friday out of term-time) or via on-line chat on weekdays from 14.00 – 16.00. Arrangements can also be made for meetings via Skype.
- assessment and support (including specialist IT support) facilities if you have a disability, long term health problem or Specific Learning Difficulty (e.g. dyslexia).
- the Student Services Centre (SSC) to assist you with a range of general enquiries including financial matters, accommodation, exams, graduation, student visas, ID cards
- Career and Employability services, advising on job search, applications, interviews, paid work, volunteering and internship opportunities and getting the most out of your extra-curricular activities alongside your degree programme when writing your CV
- Other support that includes health services (GPs), chaplaincy (for all faiths) and 'out of hours' support for students in Halls and in the local community, (18.00-08.00)
- A Centre for Language Study, providing assistance in the development of English language and study skills for non-native speakers.

The Students' Union provides

- an academic student representation system, consisting of Course Representatives, Academic Presidents, Faculty Officers and the Vice-President Education; SUSU provides training and support for all these representatives, whose role is to represent students' views to the University.
- opportunities for extracurricular activities and volunteering
- an Advice Centre offering free and confidential advice including support if you need to make an academic appeal
- Support for student peer-to-peer groups, such as Nightline.

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- Career Destinations, advising on job search, applications, interviews, paid work, volunteering and internship opportunities and getting the most out of your extra-curricular activities alongside your degree programme when writing your CV
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Associated with your programme you will be able to take part in:

- the annual Litmus project, which pairs creative writers with research scientists
- a final end-of-year anthology launch

Methods for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning

You will have the opportunity to have your say on the quality of the programme in the following ways:

- Completing student evaluation questionnaires for each module of the programme.
- Acting as a student representative on various committees, e.g. Staff/Student Liaison Committees, School Programmes Committee OR providing comments to your student representative to feedback on your behalf.
- Serving as a student representative on Faculty Scrutiny Groups for programme validation.
- Taking part in programme validation meetings by joining a panel of students to meet with the Faculty Scrutiny Group.

Further details on the University's quality assurance processes are given in the [Quality Handbook](#).

Career Opportunities

An MA in Creative Writing is excellent preparation for a career in publishing and arts administration. Graduates of our programme go onto professional careers in writing (from journalism to fiction), international PhD programmes, teaching, broadcasting, and varied work in the creative industries. Former graduates and alumni return to give talks throughout the year, and you will help you make the most of the opportunities here.

A number of our graduates have gone on to careers as published novelists, and found the year-long course invaluable in shaping and developing their voice.

External Examiner(s) for the programme

Name: Dr Tristan Hughes - University of Cardiff

Students must not contact External Examiner(s) directly, and external examiners have been advised to refer any such communications back to the University. Students should raise any general queries about the assessment and examination process for the programme with their Course Representative, for consideration through Staff: Student Liaison Committee in the first instance, and Student representatives on Staff: Student Liaison Committees will have the opportunity to consider external examiners' reports as part of the University's quality assurance process.

External examiners do not have a direct role in determining results for individual students, and students wishing to discuss their own performance in assessment should contact their Personal Academic Tutor in the first instance.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information can be found in the programme handbook.

Appendix 1:

Students are responsible for meeting the cost of essential textbooks, and of producing such essays, assignments, laboratory reports and dissertations as are required to fulfil the academic requirements for each programme of study. In addition to this, students registered for this programme also have to pay for:

Additional Costs

Type	Details
Computer discs or USB drives	Students are expected to provide their own portable data storage device.
Hardware	It is advisable that students provide their own laptop or personal computer, although shared facilities are available across the University campus.
Laboratory Equipment and Materials	All laboratory equipment and materials are provided.
Printing and Photocopying Costs	<p>Where possible, coursework such as essays; projects; dissertations is likely to be submitted on line. However, there are some items where it is not possible to submit on line and students will be asked to provide a printed copy.</p> <p>A list of the University printing costs can be found here: http://www.southampton.ac.uk/isolutions/students/printing/</p>
Software Licenses	All software is provided
Stationery	You will be expected to provide your own day-to-day stationery items, e.g. pens, pencils, notebooks, etc.). Any specialist stationery items will be specified under the Additional Costs tab of the relevant module profile.
Textbooks	<p>Where a module specifies core texts these should generally be available on the reserve list in the library. However due to demand, students may prefer to buy their own copies. These can be purchased from any source.</p> <p>Some modules suggest reading texts as optional background reading. The library may hold copies of such texts, or alternatively you may wish to purchase your own copies.</p> <p>Although not essential reading, you may benefit from the additional reading materials for the module.</p>

In some cases you'll be able to choose modules (which may have different costs associated with that module) which will change the overall cost of a programme to you. Details of such costs will be listed in the Module Profile. Please also ensure you read the section on additional costs in the University's Fees, Charges and Expenses Regulations in the University Calendar available at www.calendar.soton.ac.uk.