

Programme Specification

Academic Year 2017-18 MA Creative Writing

Programme code: 4269 (Full Time); 4270 (Part Time)

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 or Part time is permitted
Duration in years	1 year (full time) or 2 years (part time)
Accreditation details	Not applicable
Final award	Master of Arts
Name of award	MA Creative Writing
Interim Exit awards	PG Certificate in Creative Writing PG Diploma in Creative Writing
FHEQ level of final award	HE7
UCAS code	Not applicable
QAA Subject Benchmark or other external reference	QAA Masters Degree Characteristics (2010)
Programme Lead	Carole Burns
Date specification was written	01/05/2005
Date Programme was validated	January 2012
Date specification was last updated	June 2017

Programme Overview

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 Amer 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.

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 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

Knowledge and Understanding

Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to demonstrate 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

Having successfully completed 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

Having successfully completed 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.
- C 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

Programme details

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.

Availability of Modules

The information contained in programme specification is correct at the time it was published. Typically, around a quarter of optional modules do not run due to low interest or unanticipated changes in staff availability. If we do have insufficient numbers of students interested in an optional module, this may not be offered. If an optional module will not be run, we will advise you as soon as possible and help you choose an alternative module.

Core modules		Credits
ENGL6137	Creative Skills Workshop	30 ECTS (60 CATS)
ENGL6136	Creative Project	30 ECTS (60 CATS)

	Choose two of the following four modules to be taken as Core (those which are not taken as Core will be available as Option modules)	
ENGL 6116	Writing for Children and Young People	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
ENGL 6117	The Art and Craft of Fiction I	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
ENGL 6118	The Art and Craft of Fiction II	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
ENGL 6115	Scriptwriting	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
Subject Specific Option modules		
ENGL6116	Writing for Children and Young People	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
ENGL6117	Art and Craft of Fiction Part 1	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
ENGL6115	Scriptwriting	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
ENGL6118	Art and Craft of Fiction Part 2	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
ENGL6124	Sweatshops, Sexworkers and Asylum Seekers	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
ENGL6133	Shakespeare and His World	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
ENGL6126	Special Project: Text, Context and Intertext	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
ENGL6127	Special Project: Text, Context and Intertext	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
ENGL6128	Special Project: Text, Culture and Theory	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
ENGL6129	Special Project: Text, Culture and Theory	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
ENGL6130	Approaches to the Nineteenth Century	15 ECTS (30 CATS)
ENGL6131	Approaches to the Twentieth Century	15 ECTS (30 CATS)
ENGL6134	Approaches to the Eighteenth Century	15 ECTS (30 CATS)
HUMA6012	Jerusalem: City and Symbol	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)
HUMA6015	Narrative Non-Fiction: The Interdisciplinary Art	7.5 ECTS (15 CATS)

Additional Costs

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. Costs that students registered for this programme typically also have to pay for are included in Appendix 2.

Progression Requirements

The programme follows the University's regulations for [*Progression, Determination and Classification of Results : Standalone Masters Programmes*](http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/progression-regs.html) as set out in the University Calendar:

<http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/progression-regs.html>

Intermediate exit points

You will be eligible for an interim exit award if you complete part of the programme but not all of it, as follows:

Qualification	Minimum overall credit in ECTS credits	Minimum ECTS credits required at level of award
Postgraduate Certificate	at least 30	20
Postgraduate Diploma	At least 60	45

Percentage of assessment

In calculating the level achieved on the final MA, the taught modules contribute 33.3% of the total assessment of the final MA. The workshop portfolio and creative project contribute 66.7%.

Students may, in consultation with the convenor, choose one option offered by other MAs than the English MA. It may also be possible for students to undertake an Individually Negotiated Topic (INT) in place of an Option module. This may be related to the proposed creative project *but should never overlap with it*, and must be agreed with the programme convenor and a named supervisor. INTs fall under the regulations of the Faculty.

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.
- 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 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
- Other support that includes health services (GPs), chaplaincy (for all faiths) and 'out of hours' support for students in Halls (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.

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, Faculty Programmes Committee OR providing comments to your student representative to feed back 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

The ways in which the quality of your programme is checked, both inside and outside the University, are:

- Regular module and programme reports which are monitored by the Faculty
- Programme validation, normally every five years.
- External examiners, who produce an annual report
- A national Research Excellence Framework (our research activity contributes directly to the quality of your learning experience)
- Higher Education Review by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

Criteria for admission

Entry Requirements

The University's Admissions Policy applies equally to all programmes of study. The following are the typical entry criteria to be used for selecting candidates for admission. The University's approved equivalencies for the requirements listed below will also be acceptable.

Qualification	Grade/GPA	Subjects requirements	Specific requirements
Honours degree or equivalent	First- or upper second-class	English literature or a related subject	

Mature applicants

Studying for a degree later in life can be extremely rewarding and mature students are often among our most successful.

If you are over 21 and feel you would benefit from degree-level studies, we can be more flexible about our entry requirements. For full-time courses, selectors will expect you to demonstrate your commitment by means of some recent serious study, for example, one or two A level passes, successful completion of an Open University foundation course or an appropriate Access course. Your application will be considered on individual merit and you may be asked to attend an interview.

More information on the entry requirements for MA Creative Writing can be found on the English webpage here: http://www.southampton.ac.uk/humanities/postgraduate/taught_courses/taught_courses/english/w800_ma_creative_writing.page

For further information, please contact our Admissions Team: pgafh@southampton.ac.uk

The University's Admission policy is available at

<http://www.southampton.ac.uk/studentadmin/admissions/admissionspolicies/policy/>

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The University has a [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#)

Students are accepted under the University's recognition of prior learning policy; however, each case will be reviewed on an individual basis.

English Language Proficiency

Overall	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening
7.0	6.5	7.0	6.5	6.5

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 Julie Wheelwright
Institution City University London

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 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 s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information can be found in the programme handbook (or other appropriate guide) or online at http://www.southampton.ac.uk/humanities/postgraduate/taught_courses/taught_courses/english/w800_ma_creative_writing.page? .

Appendix:

Learning outcomes and Assessment Mapping document template

Module Code	Module Title	Knowledge and Understanding								Subject Specific Intellectual Skills							
		A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8
ENGL6137	Creative Skills Workshop		•					•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•
ENGL6136	Creative Project		•				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
ENGL 6116	Writing for Children and Young People	•			•							•			•		
ENGL 6117	The Art and Craft of Fiction I	•		•	•	•		•				•			•		
ENGL 6118	The Art and Craft of Fiction II	•		•	•	•		•				•			•		
ENGL 6115	Scriptwriting	•			•		•					•			•		•

Module Code	Module Title	Transferable/Key Skills							
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8
ENGL6137	Creative Skills Workshop	•	•	•	•		•	•	•
ENGL6136	Creative Project			•		•	•	•	•
ENGL 6116	Writing for Children and Young People		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
ENGL 6117	The Art and Craft of Fiction I		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
ENGL 6118	The Art and Craft of Fiction II		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
ENGL 6115	Scriptwriting		•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Module Code	Module Title	Coursework 1	Coursework 2	Exam
ENGL6137	Creative Skills Workshop	A major piece of creative work of 12,000 – 15,000 words, or the equivalent in script or poetry 75%	A 3,000-4,000 word critical commentary (with full bibliography) which considers in detail ONE technique, critical issue, literary genre, or extended piece of research explored in the creative submission 25%	n/a
ENGL6136	Creative Project	A major piece of creative work of no more than 15,000 words, or the equivalent in script or poetry 75%	A 3,000-4,000 word critical commentary (with full bibliography) which considers in detail ONE technique, critical issue, literary genre, or extended piece of research explored in the creative submission 25%	n/a
ENGL6116	Writing for Children and Young People	A 3,000-4,000 word story or opening of a novel for children or young people 75%	A 1,000-word critical commentary (with full bibliography) which considers how ONE of the set texts writes for its age group 25%	n/a
ENGL6117	The Art and Craft of Fiction I	A piece of fiction of 4,000-5,000 words informed by the methods and themes that inspire contemporary international fiction 75%	A 1,000-word critical commentary (with full bibliography) which offers a writer's response to ONE of the course texts 25%	n/a
ENGL6118	The Art and Craft of Fiction II	A 6,000-word project comprised of two or more short stories toward a collection 75%	A 1,000-word critical commentary (with full bibliography) which explores ONE characteristic of the short story genre, making reference both to module texts and your own creative practice (25%) 25%	n/a
ENGL6115	Scriptwriting	A script of 15-20 minutes intended as part of a full-length play 75%	A 1,000-word critical commentary (with full bibliography) with considers ONE scriptwriting technique you have developed on the module 25%	n/a

Appendix 2

Appendix 2:

Additional Costs

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 typically also have to pay for:

- **Books and Stationery Equipment (such as Lab equipment, Field Equipment, Art equipment, Recording Equipment, stethoscopes, fob watch, Excavation equipment, Approved Calculators)**
- **Materials (such as laboratory materials, textbooks, drawing paper, fabric, thread, computer disks, Sheet Music)**
- **Printing and Photocopying Costs (such as Printing coursework for submission, Printing and binding dissertations or theses, Academic Poster (A1) printing).**
- **Field Trips (including accommodation costs for the field trips)**
- **Travel Costs for placements, field trips and to and from the University and various campus locations (including travel insurance).**
- **Paying for immunisation and vaccination costs before being allowed to attend placements.**
- **Conference expenses**
- **Professional exams**
- **Replacing lost student ID cards**
- **Other activities (e.g. visiting specialist marine stations and other institutions)**
- **Costs of attending a graduation ceremony (e.g. hiring a gown for graduation).**

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.