

School of Arts
Department of English & Humanities

MA CREATIVE WRITING
Academic Year 2019-20

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This document is for reference only. Every effort was made to ensure that information was correct at time of print, but discrepancies may still occur due to the nature of this document. Any changes will be communicated to you via email or Moodle.

Welcome

When **Birkbeck College** was established in 1823, its principal mission was to provide education and training to working adults who earlier in life had lacked educational opportunity. A College of the University of London since 1920, Birkbeck is committed to the concept of lifelong education, and especially within the world of work. Birkbeck and the other member colleges of the University of London have many research interests in common and share the same standards and degrees structures, but in one important respect Birkbeck is unique. Our mission is 'to provide courses of study to meet the changing educational, cultural and training needs of adults who are engaged in earning their livelihood, and others who are able to benefit' (Birkbeck College Charter).

Birkbeck College has built up special expertise in providing a stimulating, positive learning environment for adult, mature students. Recently we have also expanded our provision for full-time postgraduate students. We award undergraduate degrees in a full range of disciplines and have an unusually high proportion of students following taught Masters and MPhil/PhD courses.

The **MA in Creative Writing** is offered by the Department of English and Humanities in the School of Arts and can be taken full-time for one year or part-time over two-years. All classes are taught in the evenings. Supporting writers of fiction and creative non-fiction (with some options for poetry, playwriting, screenwriting, and writing in genre - young adult, crime etc), our aim is to help you develop skills to a professional level in your chosen genre through workshops, regular tutorials and dissertation supervision, and to develop your critical understanding of contemporary literature. Students will benefit from the expertise of writers with international standing, as well as visiting publishers, editors and literary agents. Students can also volunteer as editors for the annual literary magazine, *The Mechanics' Institute Review* that showcases student writing and facilitates contact between students and the creative industries and as interns on the MIRONline website and the MIRLive events which take place termly. Further information about these activities can be found at www.mironline.org and by signing up for the newsletter.

Students begin the programme in the autumn term with the **Writing and Reading Seminar** that concentrates on the short story. Each weekly class is divided into a writing segment where students present and discuss their writing, and a critical segment in which essential works of

short fiction are given close textual readings. In this way students engage in the art of reading as well as writing.

Also in the autumn term, full-time students will take one of the three **Contemporary Literature Core Modules** (part time students in their second year) that focuses on either **genre (the structures of storytelling)**, **literary non-fiction** or **poetry** and the critical theory propelling such work.

In the spring term the **Writing Workshop** will follow on from the Writing and Reading Seminar and concentrate solely on students' own writing (part-time students take this in their second year). You will critique the work of your peers either whole short stories or sections of novels in progress.

The **Option modules** also run in the spring term (part-time students take an option in their first year). You will elect to study one module from a range offered by the department, but will need to nominate a second and third choice in the event your first choice option is full.

In the summer term there will be a series of lectures and **craft seminars** focusing on aspects of narrative art, and **visiting speakers** (such as a literary agent and an editor from a publishing house). These seminars and talks give crucial insights into the mechanisms of the novel and the cultural industries respectively and are not to be missed. The summer term is a non-assessed term.

Your **Dissertation Supervisions** will occur in the Summer Term by appointment with your tutor. Full time students will get two, one-hour supervisions. Part time students will have a fifteen minute tutorial in the first year, and two half an hour supervisions in the second year.

You will be assigned a Personal Tutor who is your first contact for any queries you may have about academic or pastoral issues.

Birkbeck is now a corporate member of the **Royal Society of Literature**. More information can be found on their website at www.rslit.org.

Starting your Course

Enrolment: Important Information

After receiving an offer of a place on the MA, you need to enrol as soon as possible (see administrative information, below). For early applicants this option is usually available from July onwards. Late applicants (those interviewed in August/September) may experience some delay in receiving their enrolment details at what is the busiest time of the year for Registry. Please click [here](#) to complete your enrolment via your My Birkbeck profile.

The College will expect you to have formally enrolled and to have begun paying your fees by mid-October. You must enrol by the end of October or you may not be eligible to continue your degree.

A student who withdraws after enrolling is liable for payment of fees for the first term of their intended study, and all subsequent terms up to and including the term in which they withdraw **or** for the full fees due for all modular enrolments (whichever is greater). Fees are not returnable, but requests for ex-gratia refunds of part of the fees paid in cases where a student is obliged to withdraw because of circumstances beyond the student's own control (but normally excluding changes in employment) may be made.

Fees/ Finance

College fees may be paid by many methods. Additional expenses will be incurred and it is important to budget for the purchase of books. Whilst we have great sympathy with students who find difficulties in paying their fees, neither the Course Director nor any of your supervisors have the power to waive fees or sanction delays in payment. The College Finance Office deals with fees and you should communicate and negotiate with them directly on 020 7631 6295. Students who fail to pay their fees may become ineligible to continue the course or unable to submit assessments. Any student who has a debt to the College at the end of the year will not have their marks relayed to them. The College fees policy can be found here www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/College-Fees-Policy.pdf

Contact Details/Email

Birkbeck students are required to maintain their personal details via the [My Birkbeck Profile](#) (student intranet) throughout their period of study. Failure to maintain this information via your student portal will mean that you may miss important information concerning the course. You may

nominate an email via your My Birkbeck Profile. If you encounter any difficulty with this process please visit the [ITS Service Desk](#) in the main Malet Street building. Email is the normal means of communication in the School of Arts.

School of Arts Location

The School of Arts is housed at 43 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PD, where you will find the administrative offices and individual staff offices. Teaching often takes place in our building, but your lectures may be held in any of the University of London or University College London buildings. Please login to your My Birkbeck Profile for access to your student timetable and links to maps of the buildings.

The Administrative Office

Please contact your Programme Administrator by phone or email to discuss any queries or to book an appointment. During term time, the Gordon Square entrance is staffed from 8.00am to 9.00pm, Monday to Friday and is open between 9.00am and 5.00pm on Saturdays (during term time only).

Moodle (Birkbeck's Virtual Learning Environment Platform)

[Moodle](#) is an online student portal. **You will be expected to upload and submit all assignment documents using Moodle throughout the duration of your study.** You can also use Moodle to access interactive tutorials, lecture slides, reading lists and recorded lectures, career management resources and your personal student record.

It is recommended all students access Moodle Support for Students to become familiar with how to access Moodle and submit coursework online. Please Login to Moodle with your Birkbeck College username and password. If you do not have your username and password, please contact ITS Reception in the main Malet Street building or by e-mail at its-helpdesk@bbk.ac.uk. If you have difficulty using Moodle, please contact/visit the ITS Help Desk where they can walk you through the process.

Books: to buy or borrow?

Throughout your degree you will be given reading lists, which will include both essential texts forming the basis of lectures and seminars, and suggestions for wider reading. The distinction between these two categories is clearly marked in this booklet. The first you will normally be expected to buy (particular versions or editions are specified in some cases) or photocopy from the short loan collection in Birkbeck Library. If you have trouble obtaining the recommended edition, or already own an

alternative, a substitute will often be acceptable; consult the lecturer concerned if you are in any doubt. If you intend to rely on libraries, bear in mind that many other students will inevitably need the books at exactly the same time as you do. It is your responsibility to obtain these books in time for the classes. If you do find that a book has become unobtainable for any reason, please let the lecturer know as soon as possible.

Attendance Requirements

Taking a degree course at Birkbeck requires a high level of commitment, and it is important that you attend seminars consistently. Regular attendance is a requirement of every course unit and you will be required to register your attendance each week. **It is your responsibility to make sure you sign in using the e-register (see below) at every class you attend.** It is accepted that through illness or exceptional pressure at home or at work you may have to miss occasional classes, but if you have to be absent from several classes, or you know that you are going to have difficulties in attending regularly, please inform the Programme Director. **We do require notice of intended absence in writing (by email) to your module tutor AND your Programme Administrator.**

Registering your attendance with eRegisters

The eRegisters system allows students to keep track of and monitor their own attendance at teaching events. In Birkbeck teaching rooms, students will be expected to tap their Birkbeck student ID card onto a card reader at the beginning of each class. **Please remember it is your responsibility to bring your Birkbeck ID card to class to monitor your attendance. This is especially important for those of you that are Tier 4 students.** For further information on eRegisters please click [here](#).

Programme Structure

Part-Time

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Part-time students Year 1	Writing and Reading Seminar Wednesday <i>2 tutorials (up to 30 mins)</i>	Option Modules Various days	Summer tutorial <i>1 tutorial: up to 15 minutes</i> Craft seminars and visiting professionals
Part-time students Year 2	Contemporary Literature module Various Days	Writing Workshop Wednesday <i>2 tutorials (up to 30 mins)</i>	Dissertation supervision <i>2 tutorials: up to 30 minutes</i> Craft seminars and visiting professionals

Full-time

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Writing and Reading Seminar Wednesday <i>2 tutorials (up to 30 mins)</i>	Writing Workshop Wednesday <i>2 tutorials (up to 30 mins)</i>	Dissertation supervision <i>Two tutorials up to 60 minutes each</i>
Contemporary Literature module Various Days	Option Modules Various Days	Craft seminars and visiting professionals

Aims and Outcomes of the Programme

The aims of the programme are to enable students to:

- Develop to a professional level the craft of writing in a particular genre
- Develop confidence, sensitivity and discernment in their analysis of their own and their fellow students' work
- Develop a greater critical understanding of contemporary literary developments
- Place their own writing in the context of developments in contemporary fiction
- Develop to professional level skill in editing of both their own and fellow students' creative work
- Gain a greater practical knowledge and understanding of the markets for fiction
- Complete under supervision a creative dissertation of high literary quality

By the end of the programme students will have:

- Developed the skills and techniques involved in writing in a particular genre and in completing a substantial creative dissertation
- Developed a critical understanding of literary writing through study of contemporary movements and theory, close readings of individual texts and by placing your own work in relation to contemporary writers
- Gained practical knowledge of the publishing industry by learning how to present and market your creative work
- Completed and submitted for assessment a creative writing portfolio

Module Availability

We reserve the right to cancel modules that do not recruit the minimum student numbers as required by Birkbeck College. In addition, please remember that both the requirements of the Department and the personal circumstances of tutors may change over the course of the year. This booklet is for reference only.

Module Information

Autumn Term

The autumn term starts on Monday 30th September with an **induction for all new students on Thursday 26th of September**. This is an opportunity for you to meet tutors and fellow students and to learn more about the programme. It is important that you attend as the course pack for the Writing and Reading Seminar will be distributed, and class groups will be drawn up.

Details of the induction will be sent to students via email closer to the date.

The first Writing and Reading Seminar will run on Wednesday 2 October.

Writing and Reading Seminar

ENHU036S7

Wednesday

6:00pm-8.30pm

Tutors: Julia Bell, Toby Litt, Jodie Kim

Module Aims and Outcomes

- Develop to a professional level the craft of writing in the short story genre
- Develop confidence, sensitivity and discernment in their analysis of their own and their fellow students' work
- Develop a greater critical understanding of contemporary literary developments
- Place their own writing in the context of developments in contemporary fiction
- Develop to professional level skill in editing of both their own and fellow students' creative work
- Gain a greater practical knowledge and understanding of the markets for fiction

Module Description

This module focuses on the student's emerging creative writing and the significance of reading texts for the writer. Each of the ten sessions is divided into writing segments where students present a short story for the class to critique (These stories should be no longer than 3000 words in length but can be shorter). This is followed by a 1000 word critical reflection choosing one essential reading from the module. How has this

story helped you improve your own writing? Ground your answer in close reading using two technical themes (POV, time, territory, etc).

Assignment	Description	Weighting
Coursework	3000 word short story	100%
Assessed Essay	1000 word critical reflection	

Required Texts

Required reading will be made available at the start of term (via the course reader or Moodle). It is your responsibility to read set texts in advance of class each week.

Coursework Deadline: Monday 13 January 2020, 2pm via Turnitin

Optional Reading

Babel, Isaac, *The Collected Stories of Isaac Babel* (Norton, 2002)
 Barry, Kevin, *Dark Lies the Island* (Vintage, 2013)
 Barrett, Colin, *Young Skins* (Cape, 2014)
 Bennett, Claire-Louise, *Pond* (Fitzcarraldo Editions, 2015)
 Carter, Angela, *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (Gollanz, 1979)
 Carver, Raymond, *Where I'm Calling From* (Harvill, 1993)
 Chekhov, Anton, *The Kiss and other Stories* (Penguin, 1982)
 Davis, Lydia, *Almost No Memory* (Picador USA, 2001)
 Joyce, James, *Dubliners* (Penguin, 2007)
 July, Miranda, *No One Belongs Here More Than You* (Canongate 2007)
 Keegan, Claire, *Antarctica* (Faber, 1999)
 McGregor, Jon, *This isn't the sort of thing that happens to someone like you* (Bloomsbury, 2013)
 Mansfield, Katherine, *The Collected Stories* (Penguin, 2004)
 Munro, Alice, *Too Much Happiness* (Vintage, 2010)
 Packer, Z.Z., *Drinking Coffee Elsewhere* (Canongate, 2004)
 Proulx, Annie, *Close Range: Wyoming Stories* (4th Estate, 2000)
 Saunders, George, *Tenth of December* (Bloomsbury, 2013)
 Simpson, Helen, *Hey Yeah Right Get a Life* (Vintage, 2001)
 Williams, Eley, *Attrib. and Other Stories* (Influx, 2017)

Further Reading

Alvarez, Al - *The Writer's Voice* (Bloomsbury, 2006)
 Bell, Julia, and Paul Magrs, eds, *The Creative Writing Coursebook* (Macmillan, 2000)
 Cohen, Robert and Parini, Jay, eds, *The Writer's Reader* (Bloomsbury 2017)

Litt, Toby, *Mutants: Selected Essays* (Seagull Books, 2016)

Lodge, David, *The Art of Fiction* (Penguin, 1992)

O'Connor, Flannery, *Mystery and Manners* (Faber, 1984)

O'Connor, Frank, *The Lonely Voice* (Melville, 2011)

Websites

Thresholds Short Story Forum: <http://blogs.chi.ac.uk/shortstoryforum/>

Granta: <http://www.granta.com/New-Writing>

Paris Review: <http://www.theparisreview.org/>

New Yorker Fiction

Podcasts: <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/books/podcast/>

Word Factory Video Archive: <http://www.thewordfactory.tv/site/>

Contemporary Literature Modules

Please note that options will only run if student numbers meet the School of Arts minimum requirement, and therefore undersubscribed options may be cancelled.

Poetry Workshop

AREN120S7

Monday

6:00-8:30pm

Tutor: Dr Hannah Copley

Fiction is a language art and a narrative form. Everything however, is built out of the sentence. Not just a carrier of narrative, a sentence has to be its own story. It needs to be declarative and arresting. In other words, the sentence has to do everything.

One of the best training grounds for the novelist on the level of the sentence is a poetry workshop. Poetry is a concentration of language, where not a single word can be wasted. Poetry also has rhythm and musicality.

This poetry workshop will be useful to all students of fiction who want to improve their literary language skills and push the sentence to another level of expertise.

Learning Objectives and Aims

On successful completion of this module, students will be expected:

- To be able to compose poetry at a formal and experimental level.
- To demonstrate knowledge of various set forms
- To evaluate their own work in a critical fashion.
- To apply their new skills to other modes of writing.
- The module will further provide students with a broad knowledge of published poetry

Communication skills learned in the workshop will aid them both socially and professionally.

Module Description

We will read from a variety of poetries with an eye and an ear to the particular uses of language and form which we find in verse, contrasting familiar, canonical texts with modern re-interpretations while attempting

our own reworkings of that material. Throughout the course we will take care to see which elements of poetic language and form touch on and inform the practices of prose-writers, while creating new poetry responding to our discoveries and workshopping it together.

The poetic representation of the self will be at the heart of our reading. Taking a roughly chronological approach, we will read poems and critical essays that address the way that poetry’s representation of the self has shifted, comparing the amorous lyric self of sonnets with the heroic social consciousness of epic and “the death of the author” in the twentieth-century.

Attitudes towards nature and politics—and their representation through form—will be to the fore throughout. We will ask how form changes when we consider such questions, and if the quality of the language we use affects the way we think about our subject—a central consideration as we seek to understand and to create a “poetics”.

Coursework and Assessment

Assignment	Description	Weighting
Assessed Essay	1500 word essay on one aspect of the craft of poetry	100%
Portfolio of Poems	Up to 12 poems (approximately 100-150 lines), some of which have been previously submitted to the workshop	

Coursework Deadline

Monday 13 January 2020, 2pm via Turnitin

Required Reading

- A selection of essays and poems posted weekly on Moodle during the term.
- Hirsch, Edward, *How to Read a Poem: And Fall in Love with Poetry* (Harvest 1999)

Recommended Reading

- Hilson, Jeff, *The Reality Street Book of Sonnets* (Reality Street 2008)
- Eliot, T.S. *The Waste Land and Other Poems* (Faber, 2002)
- Lowell, Robert, *Life Studies* (Faber, 1959)
- Frank O’Hara, *Lunch Poems* (City Lights 1964)
- Riley, Denise, *Selected Poems* (Reality Street 2000)

- Griffiths, Eric and Matthew Reynolds, *Dante in English* (Penguin 2005)
- Wordsworth, William, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge *Lyrical Ballads* (Routledge 2005)
- O'Sullivan, Maggie, *Out of Everywhere: Linguistically Innovative Poetry by Women in North America and the UK* (Reality Street 1996)
- Notley, Alice, *The Descent of Alette* (Penguin, 1996)
- Walcott, Derek, *Omeros* (Faber 2002)
- Rothenberg, Jerome and Pierre Joris (eds.), *Poems for the Millennium: The University of California Book of Modern and Postmodern Poetry, Vol. 1: From Fin-de-Siecle to Negritude* (California 1995)
- Rothenberg, Jerome and Pierre Joris (eds.), *Poems for the Millennium: The University of California Book of Modern and Postmodern Poetry, Vol. 2: From Postwar to Millennium* (California 1998)
- Salzman, Eva and Wack, Amy Eds., *Women's Work*, (Seren, 2008)
- Strand, Mark and Eavan Boland, *The Making of a Poem: A Norton Anthology of Poetic Forms* (Norton, 2000)

Websites

The Poetry Library: <http://www.poetrylibrary.org.uk/>

The Poetry Society: <http://www.poetrysociety.org.uk/>

Poetry Foundation: <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/>

Academy of American Poets: <http://www.poets.org/>

Contemporary Literature: Genre ENHU041S7

Thursday

6:00pm-8.30pm

Tutor: Darragh Martin

Module Description

Whatever your voice or thematic preoccupation, it's almost a certainty that you will have to place your characters within a compelling story if they are to engage the reader from the first page to the last. Easier said than done, perhaps. Conflict, passion, risk and uncertainty are the powerful forces at work in the world of your characters, but how can you channel these into an effective plot that provokes the reader into turning the pages?

There are few better ways of exploring these issues than looking at what is often labeled "genre fiction". Dealing predominantly with matters of plot and narrative, this module will focus as much on the underlying and archetypal structures that genre stories seem to share as on the features that distinguish one genre from another.

We will read and dissect examples of each of these genres: science fiction, Young Adult fiction, historical fiction, crime fiction.

Learning Aims and Objectives

This module will:

- Begin to develop your skill as a writer of genre.
- Give you a broad understanding of the textual strategies underlying a range of genres that dominate contemporary story-telling.
- Develop your skills of self-evaluation and constructive analysis of your own work and the work of others.
- Provide you with a strong sense of the principles of narrative and plot structure.
- Enable you to understand how generic expectation within the reader is an important tool to be exploited.
- Enable you to engage imaginatively in the analysis and interpretation of published novels and develop your own practice as a writer.
- Respond more effectively to the work of others; to participate in workshop or small group discussion by listening and contributing ideas in a sensitive and informed manner.

- Demonstrate an awareness of the industry-standard expectations for the presentation of your creative work.

Coursework and Assessment

You will be expected to write 1000 words in each genre for homework, and choose one genre in which to write your final submission coursework.

Assignment	Description	Weighting
Genre fiction piece	3000 words in either of the three genres studied	100%
Critical/reflective essay	2000 words	

Coursework Deadline

Monday 13 January 2020, 2pm via Turnitin

Required Reading (Fiction)

Mitchell, David, *Cloud Atlas* (2004)
 Christie, Agatha, *The Hollow* (1946)
 Le Guin, Ursula, *The Dispossessed* (1974)
 Okorafor, Nnedi, *Binti* (2015)
 Mantel, Hilary, *Wolf Hall* (2009)
 Thomas, Angie, *The Hate You Give* (2017)

Required Reading (Non-Fiction)

Barthes, Roland, "Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives" in *Image, Music, Text* (1977) (PDF on Moodle).
 Highsmith, Patricia, *Plotting and Writing Suspense Fiction* (1966) (photocopied extract to be supplied).
 Le Guin, Ursula, 'The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction' (1988) (pdf supplied)

Recommended Reading

Students are not required to buy these books but they are recommended as useful ancillary reading for the module:

Hammett, Dashiell, *The Maltese Falcon* (1930)
 French, Tana, *The Trespasser* (2016)
 Jemisin, N.K., *The Fifth Season* (2015)
 Waters, Sarah, *Affinity* (2002)
 Whitehead, Colson, *The Underground Railroad* (2016)
 Salinger, J. D., *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951)
 Rosoff, Meg, *How I Live Now* (2004)

Writing the Self

AREN238S7

Tuesday

6:00pm-8.30pm

Tutor: Katherine Angel

Literary non-fiction is enjoying a surge in visibility and popularity, with memoir, personal essay, and lyric essay reaching a wide readership, garnering critical acclaim, and winning prizes. Texts that have recently received attention include Maggie Nelson's *The Argonauts*, a lyric essay exploring transgender identity; *The Lonely City*, Olivia Laing's meditative book on a cluster of mostly gay male artists associated with New York City; Eula Biss's *On Immunity*, an erudite and personal essay on infection and motherhood, and Katherine Angel's formally inventive hybrid text, *Unmastered: A Book on Desire, Most Difficult To Tell*.

This module will examine the craft of good literary non-fiction in the first person, but it will also begin to question and deconstruct some of the orthodoxies of this kind of writing. Exploring the formal, narrative, and ethical questions these texts raise, the module will put these texts into dialogue with critical and theoretical writings exploring the stakes in writing about the self, identity, and subjectivity. We will explore political questions of power, community, speech, responsibility, and identity-formation, questions vital for writers to engage with as they explore the creative content, form and voice of their own writing. On whose behalf are they writing? Who are they writing for? What subjectivity can they access and mine when writing from their own lives, given the challenge that various thinkers in the 20th and 21st centuries have posed to notions of the self and truth-telling about that self? Exploration of these questions, alongside detailed attention to technical questions, will help students develop a rigorous approach to their own first-person writing.

Module Content

Week One

Introduction: Finding the Right Persona: Rules of Thumb in Memoir

Required Reading:

Vivian Gornick, *Fierce Attachments: A Memoir*

Extracts from Mary Karr, *The Art of Memoir*

Further Reading:

Vivian Gornick, *The Situation and the Story: The Art of Personal Narrative*

Week Two

Writing What You Know? Memory and Self-Knowledge

Required Reading:

Lara Pawson, *This Is The Place To Be*

Freud, 'The unconscious', *Standard Edition XIV*, or "Notes on a case of obsessional neurosis", *Standard Edition X*

Week Three

Subject Positions: The Possibility of Expression

Required reading:

Hilton Als, 'GWTW', in *White Girls*

Sara Ahmed, 'Institutional Life', & 'Speaking About Racism', in *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*

Further Reading:

Kate Zambreno, *Heroines*

Week Four

Survival's Ethics: The Politics of Illness

Required Reading

Anne Boyer, *The Undying*

Further Reading

Porochista Khakpour, *Sick: A Memoir*

Johanna Hedva, 'Sick Woman Theory'

Week Five

Grief and Grievability

Required Reading

Jesmyn Ward, *Men We Reaped*

Extracts from Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?*

Week Seven

Gender and form

Required Reading

Maggie Nelson, *The Argonauts*

Laboria Cuboniks, *The Xenofeminist Manifesto: A Politics for Alienation*

Further Reading

Jacqueline Rose, 'Trans Narratives', *LRB*

Andrea Long Chu, 'On Liking Women, *n+1*

Week Eight

Trauma and the Possibility of Writing

Required Reading

Jenn Ashworth, *Notes Made While Falling*

Week Nine

Who Are We? Sexuality and History

Required Reading

Alexander Chee, *How To Write an Autobiographical Novel*

Edouard Louis, *The End of Eddy*

Further Reading

Michel Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge: A History of Sexuality*

Week Ten

I or We? On Speaking For Others

Juliet Jacques, *Trans: A Memoir*

Alison Kafer, *Feminist Queer Crip*

Week Eleven

On In-between-ness

Will Harris, *Mixed-Race Superman*

FURTHER READING

Gloria Anzaldua, *Borderlands* (1987)

James Baldwin, *Nobody Knows My Name* (1991)

Dodie Bellamy, 'Phone Home', in *When The Sick Rule the World* (2015)

Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* and *Bodies that matter: on the discursive limits of 'sex'* (1993)

Judith Butler, *Giving An Account of Oneself* (2005)

Marie Calloway, *What purpose did I serve in your life?* (2013)

Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me* (2015)

Kimberlé Crenshaw, *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed the Movement* (1995)

Ann Cvetkovich, *Depression: A Public Feeling* (2012)

Lee Edelman, *No Future: queer theory and the death drive* (2004)

Hervé Guibert, *Crazy for Vincent* (2017)

Herve Guibert, *To the Friend Who Did Not Save My Life* (1990)

Eva Hoffman *Lost in translation* (1989)

Maxine Hong Kingston, *Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* (1989)
 Chris Kraus, *I Love Dick* (1997)
 Yiyun Li *Dear friend: from my life I write to you in your life* (2017)
 Hannah Lowe *Long Time No See* (2015) and *Chick* (2013)
 Michel Leiris, *Manhood* (1992)
 Wendy C Ortiz, *Excavation* (2014)
 Caryl Phillips, *Colour me English* (2011)
 Jasbir Puar, *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability* (2013)
 Gillian Rose, *Love's Work* (1995)
 Gayle Rubin, 'Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality', in Carole Vance, ed., *Pleasure and Danger* (Routledge & Kegan, Paul (1984)
 Edward Said, *Reflections on Exile* (2000)
 William Styron, *Darkness Visible* (1990)
 Emily Witt, *Future Sex* (2016)

Assessment

Piece of first-person writing

Assignment	Description	Weighting
Creative	4000 words	100%
Critical	1000 words	

Coursework Deadline

Monday 13 January 2020 2pm via Turnitin

Spring Term

The Spring term begins on Monday 13 January 2020 Full and part-time first year students take one option course (Creative Writing option details follow here and online). Full-time and second year part-time students also take the Writing Workshop.

The Writing Workshop

ENHU039S7

Wednesday

6:00pm-8.30pm

Tutors: Toby Litt, Jodie Kim, Mark Blacklock, Julia Bell

Module Outcomes and Aims

- Develop to a professional level the craft of writing in either the short story or novel genre
- Develop confidence, sensitivity and discernment in their analysis of their own and their fellow students' work
- Develop a greater critical understanding of contemporary literary developments
- Place their own writing in the context of developments in contemporary fiction
- Develop to professional level skill in editing of both their own and fellow students' creative work
- Gain a greater practical knowledge and understanding of the markets for fiction

Module Descriptions

This workshop follows on from the Writing and Reading Seminar and centres upon students' own writing (4000 words maximum per submission). There will be no published texts used in the workshop. Instead ongoing reference will be made to specific examples of contemporary writing that relate in some way to each student's work. You will have the opportunity to continue writing short stories or begin to develop a novel with the critical support of the class.

Essential Reading:

Cohen, Robert and Parini, Jay, eds, *The Writer's Reader* (Bloomsbury 2017)

Coursework and Assessment

Assignment	Description	Weighting
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Coursework	4000 words	100%
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Coursework Deadline

Monday 27th April 2020, 2pm via Turnitin.

Required Texts Reading

Alvarez, Al, *The Writer's Voice* (Bloomsbury, 2006)

Bell, J., and P. Magrs, eds, *The Creative Writing Handbook* (Macmillan, 2001)

Further Reading

Bennet, Alan, *Writing Home* (Faber, 1998)

Berger, John, *Ways of Seeing*, (Penguin, 1972)

Bradbury, Malcolm, ed., *The Novel Today: Contemporary Writers on Modern Fiction* (Fontana, 1990)

Cixous, Hélène, *Three Steps on the Ladder of Writing* (Columbia University Press, 1993)

Cuddon, J. A., *Book of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (Penguin, 1992)

Eagleton, Terry, *Literary Theory* (Blackwells, 1996)

O'Connor, Flannery, *Mystery & Manners: Occasional Prose* (Farrar Straus Giroux, 1969)

Sellers, Susan, ed., *Taking Reality By Surprise* (Women's Press, 1991)

Singleton, J., and M. Luckhurst, eds, *The Creative Writing Handbook* (Macmillan, 1996)

Turner, Barry, ed., *The Writer's Handbook* (Macmillan - yearly)

Option Modules

Options are allocated on a first come, first served basis. Students select ONE of the following modules, nominating a SECOND & THIRD choice in the event your first choice module is oversubscribed. You will be contacted by your Administrator when it is time to make your selections.

Please note that options will only run if there are enough students and therefore undersubscribed options may be cancelled.

You are strongly advised to give careful consideration to options offered by the Department of English and Humanities and not just those options taught by members of the creative writing team. The opportunity to study under world-class academics is a chance not to be missed that will extend your range of literary reference and help contextualise your own writing. If you would like to consider an option in another department not listed in this handbook, please contact your programme director.

Full details of all the options offered by the Department are available online, you will be sent the relevant link in due course.

Creative Non-Fiction

ENHU002S7

Tuesday

6:00pm-8.30pm

Tutors: Julia Bell, Richard Hamblyn

Module Outcomes and Objectives

By the end of this module students will have gained:

- An awareness of the styles, forms and elements of the non-fiction writer's craft, including the processes of research and exposition.
- An understanding of recent and contemporary creative non-fiction across a range of forms and genres (travel, nature, life writing, reportage, creative documentary, verbatim theatre), and an understanding of its place within literary canons.
- The confidence to tackle craft-related problems in areas such as structure, setting, atmosphere, and the use of dialogue and telling detail.
- The confidence to recognise and understand sources of inspiration and creativity.
- The ability to use research-generated ideas more confidently, precisely, and imaginatively.
- Confidence in handling a variety of research methodologies (whether electronic, archival, interview-based or investigative), with insight and creativity.
- An awareness of the industry-standard expectations for the presentation of non-fiction writing, including its bibliographic and citation conventions.
- Enhanced skills of self-evaluation as well as constructive analysis of the work of others.
- The critical and creative skills needed to realise a personal writing project, taking it from initial idea, through research to writing and editing.

Module Description

"We like non-fiction because we live in fictitious times" – Michael Moore

This ten-week module aims to develop the understanding and practice of non-fiction writing in all its forms, covering all aspects of the craft from ideas to research and writing. It will be taught through an interactive mix of reading, writing, discussion and peer appraisal.

The course will be split into two five week periods. The first five weeks focused on reading, discussion, and exercises. The second five weeks will

give every student an opportunity to workshop ONE piece of work of up to 5,000 words.

During the first 5 weeks each student will be expected to deliver a short (8 minute) presentation on that week's set text. The presentation can be about any aspect of the book that interests them, but as well as subject, we will be looking at structure, delivery, style and technique.

EVERYONE is expected to read the five set texts - even if they are not presenting - the secondary reading would be helpful but is not essential.

The assessment for the course will comprise a piece of original Creative Non-Fiction of up to 5,000 words. Each student will have ONE 30 min tutorial with the tutor in the second half of term.

Module Content

Week 1	Plenary Session Introduction: the 'truth' vs the Truth <i>What The Garbage Man Knows</i> - Peter Hessler (New Yorker)
Week 2	Politics Funder, Anna - <i>Stasiland</i> (Granta 2011) Secondary Reading: Orwell, George - <i>Down and Out in Paris and London</i> (Penguin Classics 2001)
Week 3	Workshop 1
Week 4	Place Capote, Truman - <i>In Cold Blood</i> (Penguin 2012) Solnit, Rebecca, <i>A Field Guide to Getting Lost</i> (Canongate, 2008)
Week 5	Workshop 2
Week 6	READING WEEK Personal Winterson, Jeanette, <i>Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal</i> (Vintage, 2012); vs <i>Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit</i> (Vintage, 1991)
Week 7	Workshop 3 Set essay
Week 8	Society Didion, Joan - <i>The White Album</i> (FSG 2009) Baldwin, James - <i>The Fire Next Time</i> (Penguin, 1963)

Week 9	Workshop 4
Week 10	Workshop 5

Assignment	Description	Weighting
Coursework	The assessment is via a 5,000-word piece of original creative non-fiction.	100%

Coursework Deadline

Monday 27 April 2020, 2pm via Turnitin

Further Reading Essential

Cline, Sally and Midge Gillies, *The Arvon Book of Literary Non-Fiction* (Bloomsbury, 2012)

Recommended

Beaumont, Matthew and Gregory Dart (eds), *Restless Cities* (Verso, 2010)

Bechdel, Alison, *Fun Home A Family Tragicomic* (Jonathan Cape, 2006)

Bourdain, Anthony, *Kitchen Confidential* (Bloomsbury, 2000)

Carey, John (ed.), *The Faber Book of Reportage* (Faber, 1996)

Clanchy, Kate, *Antigone and Me* (Picador, 2010)

Capote, Truman, *In Cold Blood* (Penguin Modern Classics, 2000)

Eggers, Dave, *Zeitoun* (Penguin, 2011)

Ephron, Nora, *I Remember Nothing and Other Reflections* (Doubleday, 2011)

Gerard, Phillip, *Creative Nonfiction: Researching and Crafting Stories of Real Life* (Waveland Press, 2004)

Granta 66: Truth + Lies (Granta, 1999)

Granta 102: The New Nature Writing (Granta, 2008)

Greenlaw, Lavinia, *The Importance of Music to Girls* (Faber, 2007)

Gross, John (ed.), *The Oxford Book of Essays* (Oxford University Press, 1991)

Gutkind, Lee (ed.), *In Fact: The Best of Creative Nonfiction* (W. W. Norton, 2005)

Hamblyn, Richard, *Terra: Tales of the Earth* (Picador, 2009)

Hammond, Will (ed.), *Verbatim Verbatim: Techniques in Contemporary Documentary Theatre* (Oberon, 2008)

Hersey, John, *Hiroshima* (1946; Penguin Modern Classics, 2002)

Holmes, Richard, *Footsteps: Adventures of a Romantic Biographer* (1985; Flamingo, 2005)

Jack, Ian (ed.), *The Granta Book of Reportage* (Granta, 2006)

Jamie, Kathleen, *Sightlines* (Sort Of Books, 2012)

Kramer, Mark & Wendy Call (eds), *Telling True Stories: A Nonfiction Writers' Guide* (Plume Books, 2007)

Kingsolver, Barbara, *Small Wonder: Essays* (Faber & Faber, 2002)

Lopate, Philip (ed.), *The Art of the Personal Essay: An Anthology from the Classical Era to the Present* (Anchor Books, 1995)

Masters, Alexander, *Stuart: A Life Backwards* (Harper Perennial, 2007)

McPhee, John, *The John McPhee Reader* (Farrar Straus Giroux, 1977)

Miller, Brenda & Suzanne Paola, *Tell it Slant: Writing and Shaping Creative Nonfiction* (McGraw-Hill, 2005)

Orlean, Susan, *The Orchid Thief* (Vintage, 2000)

Oswald, Alice, *Dart* (Faber and Faber, 2002)

Sage, Lorna, *Bad Blood* (Fourth Estate, 2000)

Satrapi, Marjane, *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood* (Jonathan Cape, 2003)

Schama, Simon, *Dead Certainties: Unwarranted Speculations* (Granta, 1991)

Sebald, W. G., *The Emigrants* (Vintage, 2002)

Sedaris, David, *Me Talk Pretty One Day* (Abacus, 2002)

Shields, David, *Reality Hunger: A Manifesto* (Penguin, 2011)

Sullivan, John Jeremiah, *Pulphead* (Vintage, 2012)

Talese, Gay (ed.), *The Literature of Reality: Writing Creative Nonfiction* (HarperCollins, 1996), *Frank Sinatra Has a Cold and Other Essays* (Penguin Classics, 2011)

Wallace, David Foster, *Consider the Lobster, and Other Essays* (Abacus, 2007)

Zinsser, William (ed.), *Inventing the Truth: The Art and Craft of Memoir* (Mariner Books, 1998)

Introduction to Screenwriting ENHU040S7

Tuesday

6:00pm-8.30pm

Tutor: David Stafford

Learning Objectives and Aims

- An advanced understanding of the craft of professional screenwriting as it's currently practised in the industry.

Module Description

This module will give students as thorough a grounding in the art, craft and business of writing for the screen as possible in ten weeks. Through a mix of interactive seminar presentations, assignments, workshops and analyses of produced screenplays (both on screen and on the page), we will develop an appreciation and understanding of:

- the tools of screenwriting (plot structure, characterisation, theme, dialogue etc.)
- knowledge of that which *distinguishes* the process of writing for the screen from writing prose fiction or stage drama.

The course will examine screenwriting techniques relevant to a wide range of genres and screenwriting forms. By the end of the module students will have produced two drafts of an original script (15-30 correctly formatted pages), analyzed a feature-length screenplay and viewed a wide range of complementary material.

Assignment	Description	Weighting
An original short script	15-30 correctly formatted pages	100%

Coursework Deadline

Monday 27 April 2020, 2pm via Turnitin

Films that may be referenced

An Education, w. Nick Hornby, d. Lone Scherfig (2009)

Blackkklansman, w. Charlie Wathcel (and 3 others), d. Spike Lee (2018)

Bridesmaids, w. Annie Mumolo, Kristen Wiig, d. Paul Feig (2011)

Casablanca, w. Julius J. Epstein (and 2 others), d. Michael Curtiz (1942)

Drive, w. Hossein Amini, d. Nicolas Winding Refn (2011)
Get Out, w. & d. Jordan Peele (2017)
Jaws, w. Peter Benchley, Carl Gottlieb, d. Steven Spielberg (1975)
Lady Bird, w. & d. Greta Gerwig (2017)
Mississippi Damned, w. & d. Tina Mabry (2009)
Star Wars Ep. IV - A New Hope, w. & d. George Lucas (1977)
The Godfather, Pt. II, w. Francis Ford Coppola and Mario Puzo, d. Francis Ford Coppola (1974)
The King's Speech, w. David Seidler, d. Tom Hooper (2010)

Suggested reading

Field, Syd - *The Deifinitive Guide to Screenwriting* (Ebury Press, 2003)
Goldman, William, *Adventures In The Screen Trade* (Macdonald, 1983)
Hudson, Kim, *The Virgin's Promise: Writing Stories of Feminine Creative, Spiritual, and Sexual Awakening* (Michael Wiese Productions, 2010)
Jacey, Helen, *The Woman in the Story: Writing Memorable Female Characters* (Michael Wiese, 2017)
Keane, Christopher, *How to Write a Selling Screenplay* (Broadway Books, 1998)
Mamet, David, *Bambi Versus Godzilla* (Pantheon Books, 2007)
McKee, Robert - *Story* (Methuen, 1999)
Press, Joy, *Stealing the Show: How Women are Revolutionizing Television* (Atria Books, 2019)
Seger, Linda, *Creating Unforgettable Characters* (Henry Holt, 1998)
Seger, Linda, *Making a Good Script Great* (Simian-James Press, 2010)
Snyder, Blake- *Save the Cat!* (Michael Wiese, 2005)
Trottier, David, *The Screenwriter's Bible* (Silman-James Press, 2005)
Vogler, Christopher, *The Writer's Journey* (Boxtree, 1996)
Yorke, John, *Into the Woods* (Penguin, 2014)

Introduction to Playwriting

ENHU124S7

Mondays

6:00pm-8.30pm

Tutor: Darragh Martin

Learning Outcomes and Objectives

This module will:

- Provide a coherent and graded introduction to writing for the dramatic form and thereby enable students to broaden their skills' base.
- Deepen students' awareness of the dramatic form and the playwright's craft.
- Develop students' skills of self-evaluation and constructive analysis of their own dramatic work, and that of others.
- Enable students to develop skills in editing and revising their own playwriting.

Having taken this module the successful student will be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness and control of the elements of dramatic writing.
- Discuss and evaluate the work of fellow students and established playwrights in relation to elements of craft.
- Experiment with style and form.
- Solve craft-related problems in their own dramatic work.
- Implement the practice of redrafting and editing.

Module Description

This module offers students the opportunity to develop both their understanding of and writing skills in playwriting from first principles to final draft. Through weekly workshops the student will also consider the various means of theatrical production and the nature of the business of writing for the stage. The weekly sessions combine presentations by both lecturer and student on aspects of craft, writing exercises and feedback, analyses of canonical and contemporary plays, and ongoing script development. The student will gain a thorough grounding in the fundamental elements of playwriting such as: dramatic structure, character, dialogue, subtext and the manipulation of theatrical space and time. By the end of the module students will have produced two a workshopped short original play script or an excerpt of a full length play (4500 words including stage directions), and a 1000 word reflection on the process of developing the piece and the dramaturgical challenges and choices involved.

NB In the event of this module being oversubscribed, the 15 available places will be offered to the first five students to apply from each of the MA Creative Writing and MFA Theatre Directing programmes.

Assignment	Description	Weighting
Original Playscript	Either a complete one act play or part of a full length script, (4500 words) (formatted to industry standard)	85%
Essay on craft	1,000 words	15%

Coursework Deadline

Monday 27 April 2020 2pm via Turnitin

Suggested further reading:

Aristotle, *Poetics*, (Dover Thrift, 1997 or any edition)

Aykourn, Alan, *The Crafty Art of Playmaking*, (Palgrave MacMillan, 2003)

Barker, Howard, *Arguments for a Theatre*, (Manchester University Press, 1997)

Beckett, Samuel, *The Complete Plays*, (Faber)

Brook, Peter, *The Empty Space*, (Penguin, 1968, or any edition)

Chekhov, Anton, *The Cherry Orchard*, (Penguin, 2004)

Churchill, Caryl, *A Number*, (Churchill Plays 4, Nick Hern Books, 2008)

Edgar, David (ed), *State of Play: Playwrights on Playwriting*, (Faber & Faber, 1999)

Kane, Sarah, *Complete Plays*, (Methuen, 2001)

Mamet, David, *A Whore's Profession*, (Faber, 1994)

Pinter, Harold, *The Caretaker*, (Faber 1991, or any edition)

Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*, (Penguin, 1984 or any edition)

Teevan, Colin, *How Many Miles to Basra?*, (Oberon 2007)

Teevan, Colin, *Missing Persons: Four Tragedies and Roy Keane*, (Oberon, 2006)

Summer Term

The summer term is a non-assessed term, however attendance at the lectures and craft seminars is strongly encouraged. You will receive dissertation supervision and a preface advice session. In addition, there will be an ten-week series of lectures and **craft seminars** focusing on aspects of narrative design, together with talks from **visiting speakers**. Previous speakers have included prizewinning authors, literary agents, book publishers and specialists on e-publishing.

Dissertation

ENHU002D7

For full-time students in year 1; part-time students in year 1 and 2

By appointment

Module Aims and Outcomes

- Develop to a professional level the craft of writing in the short story or novel genre
- Develop a greater critical understanding of contemporary literary developments
- Place their own writing in the context of developments in contemporary fiction
- Develop to professional level skill in editing of their own creative work
- Gain a greater practical knowledge and understanding of the markets for fiction

Module Description

Students work with their supervisors on the dissertation in one-to-one tutorials. For practical and pedagogic reasons the structure of the supervisions is slightly different for part-time and full-time students. Supervision slots will be available from mid-May through to the beginning of July. Students are expected to make appointments with tutors through the online diary, Doodle.

Part-time students

You will have a fifteen minute tutorial in your first year followed by two half an hour supervisions in your second year.

In the first year, your tutorial will be an exploratory discussion of ideas for your dissertation and an overview of your writing development thus far.

In the second year, your two supervisions will closely focus on the development of your prosewriting and ideas. You will need to produce 3,000 words of new work at least a week in advance of each supervision

Full-time students

You will be assigned two supervisors in the summer term. With each supervisor, you will have a one hour supervision, totalling two supervisions in your final term. You will need to produce 4,000 words of new work at least a week in advance of each supervision.

Submissions for supervisions

The work can be a section of a novel, or several short stories, a piece of creative non-fiction, or a screenplay, but **must not be work that has already been marked as your assignments for modules**. You must submit your work to your supervisor at least ONE WEEK before the date of the supervision. The aim of these tutorials is to help and guide you towards the writing of the 15,000 word dissertation itself, due in September of your graduating year and also to discuss your on-going writing projects. **You will get oral feedback from tutors, with some annotation on the scripts themselves.**

Please note: to remove the possibility of students duplicating work previously submitted for assessment, all dissertation material must **not** have been previously assessed. **New work (stories or novel extracts) should be submitted for dissertation supervision in the summer term and for eventual submission for final assessment in September.**

Preface

The preface is a hybrid form of literary essay/critical self-assessment and is intended to explain how you came to write the creative work in your dissertation. This is an opportunity to describe the personal journey involved in crafting an extended creative work over the course of the programme. You should discuss the development of your writing in terms of the literary influences upon it, citing at least six influencing texts,

The completed Dissertation must include a 3,000 word **preface**. If submitting a novel extract you may include a brief synopsis, if necessary, that does not have to be included in the word count.

Assignment	Description	Weighting
Dissertation	15,000 words	100%
Preface	3,000 words	

Due 2pm, Monday 14th September 2020 via Turnitin

Important Information

Part-time students should normally complete the term one Writing and Reading module before beginning Dissertation supervision.

Full-time students should normally have completed all the modules in the programme before beginning dissertation supervision.

THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

REVIEW

The Mechanics' Institute Review

The Mechanics' Institute Review is an annual magazine of short fiction by Birkbeck Creative Writing students, and MACW Alumni. A call for submissions is sent out annually in December and students can volunteer to form an editorial team who will be responsible for selecting the material to be published. Students will be expected to make decisions on format, content, design, and production, as well as oversee the physical manufacture and launch of the magazine. Although students who volunteer will not be eligible to submit work to that year's issue of MIR, they will be able to submit in subsequent years. Students are encouraged to visit London Bookfair in April (free to students). A call for volunteers will go out in November.

Coursework Presentation and Plagiarism

Guidelines and Style sheet

References within your essay and the bibliography should be full, consistent and properly presented. **You are expected to consult and follow the MHRA Style Book** where a much fuller discussion of presentation is to be found. It can be downloaded from the Department of English and Humanities website:

<http://www.mhra.org.uk/Publications/Books/StyleGuide/download.shtml>.

Essays for options run by departments other than English and Humanities should, however, follow their documentation guidelines.

While minor lapses (e.g. commas out of place, forgetting to mention the translator of a work in the bibliography) may be ignored if they are infrequent, *you will be penalized for sloppy and inaccurate documentation*. While doing your preparatory reading, it is important to take full and accurate references so as to avoid spending a great deal of time hunting back through works to find page numbers etc.

Often MA students underestimate the time it takes to prepare a successful essay. This is not only because of the extent of the reading required, but because constructing a carefully-documented piece, and dealing with a larger body of primary and secondary materials than you are likely to have experienced in writing undergraduate essays, is a time-consuming process. No matter how long you spend on doing the preparatory reading, leave yourself plenty of time to write your piece.

Presentation

Editions

Wherever possible, standard editions should be used, especially for passages essential to the argument of the essay. References to the same work should be to the same edition, unless differences between editions are relevant to the argument of the essay.

Quotations

Quotations must be accurate and should be checked carefully before the essay is submitted.

Prose quotations up to about three lines and verse quotations up to one full line should be incorporated into the body of the text. Longer

quotations should be inset, in which case inverted commas are not needed.

Once the source of quotation has been clearly identified in a footnote, quotations from the same text and edition can be identified by page number (or line number, or act, scene and line number etc., as appropriate) in parentheses immediately after the quotations, thus avoiding unnecessary footnotes.

Footnotes

Footnotes should be succinct; they should not become miniature essays. There are good grounds for restricting footnotes to:

- i) The identification of quotations and other essential documentation.
- ii) Undeveloped references to other relevant material: 'see also...'

Documenting footnotes should follow the sequences:

- a) Printed books: author, title (underlined); editor's name (if appropriate, preceded by 'ed.');
- place and date of publication (in parentheses); volume and/or page number(s).
- b) Periodical articles: author, title of article (within single inverted commas); title of periodical (underlined); volume number; date of publication (in parentheses); page number(s).

Sample footnotes:

- (1) G. R. Hibbard, *Thomas Nashe: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), p.24
- (2) Hibbard, pp. 25-6 [a following reference to the same book]
- (3) John Dryden, *Annus Mirabilis*, lines 25-6 (*Poems*, ed. J. Kinsley, Oxford: OUP, 1958), I, 53
- (4) Lois Whitney, 'English primitavistic theories of epic origins', *MP*, 21 (1924), 337 or *MP*, xxi (1924), 337

List of Sources

At the end of the essay should be listed all the works, including editions of the texts discussed, that have been consulted in its preparation. The list should be in alphabetical order of author. The conventional sequences are as follows:

printed books: author (surname first), title (underlined); editor (if appropriate); number of volumes (if more than one); place of publication [colon] publisher [comma] year of publication

articles: author (surname first); title in single inverted commas; title of periodical (underlined); volume number; date (in parentheses); numbers of first and last pages of article.

Acknowledgements

In footnotes and list of sources the student must make clear acknowledgement of ALL works, reports and sources from the internet used in writing the essay and should not descend to plagiarism or collusion. S/he should carefully note the University of London General Regulations for Internal Students, 9.5:

Where the regulations for any qualification provide for part of an examination to consist of 'take-away' papers, essays or other work written in a candidate's own time, course-work assessment or any similar form of text, the work submitted by the candidate must be his own, and any quotation from the published or unpublished works of other persons must be duly acknowledged.

Plagiarism is the quotation, verbatim or virtually verbatim, of other people's work, published or unpublished, without acknowledgement. Plagiarism carries severe penalties and may even warrant exclusion from the course. If in doubt about the protocols of acknowledgement, ask.

Assessment

All assessed essays are double-marked; a set of comments and a mark are returned to the student. These marks remain provisional until ratified by the external examiner at the Board of Examiners' meeting in November of the following year.

Student Support

Any matters that students want to discuss that are directly related to the content of the MA should be discussed with the appropriate tutor. Staff telephone numbers and email addresses will be provided.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, the act of taking somebody else's work and presenting it as your own, is an act of academic dishonesty, and Birkbeck takes it very seriously.

Examples of plagiarism include (but are not restricted to):

- copying the whole or substantial parts of a paper from a source text (e.g. a web site, journal article, book or encyclopaedia), without proper acknowledgement
- paraphrasing another's piece of work closely, with minor changes but with the essential meaning, form and/or progression of ideas maintained
- piecing together sections of the work of others into a new whole
- procuring a paper from a company or essay bank (including Internet sites)
- submitting another student's work, with or without that student's knowledge
- submitting a paper written by someone else (e.g. a peer or relative) and passing it off as one's own
- representing a piece of joint or group work as one's own.

If you knowingly assist another student to plagiarise (for example, by willingly giving them your own work to copy from), you are committing an examination offence.

What happens if plagiarism is suspected?

In October 2008, the College introduced a new three stage policy for dealing with assessment offences. The first stage allows for a very rapid and local determination for first or minor and uncontested offences. Stage two allows for a formal Department investigation, where a student wishes to contest the allegation or penalty, where there is an allegation of a

repeat offence or for more serious cases. Stage three involves a centrally convened panel for third and serious offences, dealt with under the code of Student Discipline.

What if I am worried that I'm not referencing correctly?

Please see your module tutor or contact a member of the learning support team as soon as possible. Ignorance to Birkbeck's commitment to student standards will not be accepted as an excuse in a plagiarism hearing. The following links from Birkbeck's Registry provide some helpful information, but are not intended to replace any guidelines or tuition provided by the academic staff.

General Guidelines

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/exams/plagiarism-guidelines>

Assessment Offences Policy

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies/documents/assessment-offences-policy.pdf> – Written for Birkbeck's Registry.

Plagiarism FAQ

https://guides.turnitin.com/01_Manuals_and_Guides/Student_Guides/Feedback_Studio/FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions from Turn It In.

Coursework Submission

All work should normally be computer-generated (using a format compatible with Microsoft Word, and not a PDF or similar). All work should be submitted double-spaced. Please note that the word count should include footnotes but excludes the bibliography.

Your work should normally be submitted electronically, via Turnitin (or, exceptionally, in case of difficulty with this system, by email to the administrator concerned). You may, exceptionally, also be asked to leave a paper copy in the coursework box in the entrance hall of 43 Gordon Square. You should also retain a copy yourself. **In no circumstances should essays be handed directly to the lecturer or seminar leader.**

Paper copies of coursework should be stapled in the top left-hand corner, with your completed coversheet forming the top page. It should be placed in an envelope which is clearly marked with the name of the lecturer and the module title. **Please do not put them in a folder or plastic sleeve: markers prefer to receive work simply stapled.**

For further information and instructions on how to submit coursework using Turnitin please see the appendices or visit the ITS Help Desk.

Return of Coursework

Coursework will *normally* be marked and returned electronically within 4-6 weeks from the stated submission date or the date of handing in, whichever is later. Larger modules and modules with numerous seminar groups, such as core modules, could take longer due to the number of students involved. There may also be a delay if the college is closed or if there are extended holidays during that 4-6 week period.

Essays are never sent back to students by post. If online submission/return has not been used, your lecturer will advise the method by which your work will be returned - normally via the student pigeonholes in the entrance hall of 43 Gordon Square. Your administrator will email you to let you know when coursework has been marked. Please do not phone/e-mail to ask whether your essay has been marked unless the marking periods as above have elapsed.

College Assessment Policy

It may also be useful to familiarise yourself with the official college assessment policy. Please see the following link:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies/documents/feedback-on-assessment.pdf>

Late Submission of work for assessment

All Schools and Departments across the College have moved to a system whereby students are **not** permitted to ask for extensions to coursework deadlines. If for some reason you are unable to submit a piece of work by the deadline, you should complete a Mitigating Circumstances form, which can be downloaded from the Birkbeck website [here](#). This form gives you space to describe the circumstances that have prevented you from meeting the deadline, and requires you to provide supporting evidence (e.g. medical certificate).

It is advisable to discuss the situation with your personal tutor before submitting the form. The [Mitigating Circumstances Form](#) should be emailed to the course administrator or handed in to the Department office **within 14 days of the deadline**. Any work that is submitted for formal assessment after the published deadline is given two marks: a penalty mark of 50% for postgraduate students, assuming it is of a pass standard, and the 'real' mark that would have been awarded if the work had not been late. The case will then be considered by the appropriate sub-board or delegated panel.

If no case is made then the penalty mark will stand. If a case is made and accepted then the examination board may allow the 'real' mark to stand.

Note: If you are taking an option within another School please note that you will need to adhere to the deadline/ extension policy of the School in which the option course is based.

Dissertations

It is particularly important to submit dissertations on the deadline date. This deadline is not negotiable. If missed, the candidate may not be examined in the same year and may have to wait another twelve months before being awarded the degree as MA examination boards meet only once a year, in November. Any difficulty in meeting the dissertation deadline should be brought to the attention of the Course Director at the earliest opportunity.

Assessment Requirements for the MA Creative Writing Programme

Assessment is based entirely on coursework. To pass the programme, students must complete all the coursework, which includes critical essays, creative pieces and the dissertation, and achieve an overall mark of 50 or above. Coursework should normally be submitted in the first week of the succeeding term. All manuscripts must be typed in Times New Roman and double-spaced.

Students who fail their dissertation are allowed to resubmit once.

Assessment Weighting

67% of the overall grade (average of the marks from four modules) includes:

- 16.75% Writing and Reading Seminar: creative piece and a short critical essay, 5,000 words **in total**.
- 16.75% Contemporary Literature Module: Poetry Workshop: 1500 word essay and portfolio of 10-12 poems. Contemporary Writing 2: Genre: genre fiction piece and critical/reflective piece, 5,000 words **in total**.
- 16.75% The Writing Workshop: Creative piece (100%). **5,000 words**.
- 16.75% Option Module: Assessment criteria varies with each option.

33% of the overall grade:

- Dissertation (18,000 words **in total - not including bibliography**)

Marking Scheme

Distinction

A 75% - 100%

A - 73% - 74%

A -- 70% - 72%

Merit

AB 69%

B++ 66% - 68%

B+ 63% - 65%

B(+) 60% - 62%

Pass

B 59%

B(-) 56% - 58%

B- 53% - 55%

B-- 50% - 52%

Assessment Criteria

Short Creative Pieces

A **Pass** should show:

- Engagement with the structure and conventions of a particular genre
- Understanding of the relationship between content and form
- Competent use of language
- Awareness of reader/audience

A **Merit** should also show:

- Confident handling of the structure of a particular genre
- Willingness to experiment
- Fresh (i.e. non-clichéd) use of language

A **Distinction** should also show:

- Ambitious and/or original choice of content
- Accomplished handling of chosen form
- Original use of language

Critical essays on contemporary writing

A **Pass** should show:

- Awareness of the variety and range of contemporary writing
- Ability to analyse the use of language in published writing
- Analysis of the relevant aspects of the 'craft' of writing
- Sustained critical thinking
- Competent use of language

A **Merit** should also show:

- A willingness to approach 'difficult' writing
- Ability to sustain a convincing critical analysis
- Fresh use of language

A **Distinction** should also show:

- Sharp critical insight into what makes a literary work successful against different criteria
- Awareness of critical methods and theories
- Fluent use of critical language

Dissertation

A **Pass** should show:

- Awareness of the strengths and limitations of the chosen genre and of its 'fitness for purpose'
- Ability to use structure and voice to develop elements of one or more of the following: narrative, theme, character, prosody
- Understanding of the relationship between content and form
- Competent use of fictional, dramatic or poetic techniques
- Awareness of reader/audience
- Commitment to editing
- Appropriate use of research (where relevant)

A **Merit** should also show:

- Ambition in both formal and thematic or narrative scope of the piece
- Development of distinctive writing 'voice'
- Ability to produce fresh (i.e. non-clichéd) passages of writing

A **Distinction** should also show:

- Ability to produce a fully realised, sustained piece of writing
- Originality of use of one or more of the following: language, form, content

Degree Regulations

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Study

The majority of Birkbeck's programmes are offered as part of the College's Common Award Scheme (CAS). Programmes will therefore have common regulations, and a common structure. This will help to ensure greater consistency of practice amongst programmes and will also make it possible for you to take modules from Departments across the College which are outside of your normal programme (subject to programme regulations and timetable constraints).

Some areas covered by CAS Regulations include:

- Degree Structure
- Degree Classification
- Module Weighting
- Marking Scheme
- Failure and Re-Assessment
- Plagiarism and Academic Offences
- Mitigating Circumstances.

You are **strongly** encouraged to read the information provided here <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies/documents/CAS-regs-19-20.pdf>.

Research Ethics

All research involving human participants and confidential materials, carried out by students in the School of Arts is subject to an ethics approval process. This is to ensure that the rights of participants and researchers alike are protected at all times, and to underline our commitment to excellence in research across a wide range of subjects.

If you are undertaking any such research work for a dissertation, project, thesis etc. please complete the form 'Proposal for Ethical Review template' and pass this to your academic supervisor. The proposal will be reviewed and assessed as 'routine' or 'non-routine'. In most cases it is envisaged that such work will be routine, and your supervisor will inform you of the outcome. In a small number of cases, the proposal may be referred to the School's Ethics Committee for further consideration. Again, you will be informed of any outcome.

The proposal form is available through our departmental web pages (current students). If you have any queries, please speak to your supervisor in the first instance.

Further guidelines are available on the MyBirkbeck website at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/research/bgrs/research-ethics-and-integrity>.

Please Note

We do not undertake anonymous marking taking the view that it is unenforceable and unworkable as the small team of tutors develop a good knowledge of student work. This falls under the 'practical work' exception of Section 10 of the College assessment policy.

Student Support

Student Services at Birkbeck encompass a wide range of services within Birkbeck, aimed at supporting students' learning experience and personal development.

Advice Service

Our trained advisors are on hand to provide information and advice about many aspects of your studies at Birkbeck including but not limited to: application and enrolment process, applying for government loans and financial support from the College, and payment options.

Where we cannot answer questions immediately, we will either get back to you with an answer or refer your query to a specialist team who can.

[Ask us a question](#), call us on 020 3907 0700 or come along to our drop-in sessions for help and support. Alternatively, please visit our [website](#) for further information.

Careers and Employability Service

We provide comprehensive careers advice, events and information services both in person and online. The service is free and available to all Birkbeck students and recent graduates.

To find out how we can help you to enhance your career development and employability [ask us a question](#) or visit the Students' Employability Space. Alternatively, please visit our [website](#) for further information.

Counselling Service

We offer a free, non-judgmental and confidential counselling service to support you with emotional or psychological difficulties during your time at university.

To make an appointment for an initial consultation, please email counselling-services@bbk.ac.uk with your name, student ID, gender and telephone number. Alternatively, please visit our [website](#) for information about the service including a comprehensive selection of [self-help resources](#) which may be useful in gaining a greater understanding of the personal challenges you are facing and the ways in which you can think about addressing them.

Disability and Dyslexia Service

At Birkbeck we welcome students with disabilities and we are committed to helping you seize the opportunities that studying here presents.

Regardless of your condition, our experienced, understanding and welcoming staff are here to support you during your studies.

To make an appointment, please contact the Wellbeing Team from your My Birkbeck profile by clicking on 'Ask us' and selecting 'New Ask' or call us on 020 3907 0700. Alternatively, please visit our [website](#) for information about a Study Support Plan, Disabled Students' Allowance, free dyslexia screening and more.

Study Skills

Through a range of workshops, accessible learning materials, and one-to-one meetings, our Learning Development Service is here to help you to fulfil your potential in a number of ways while studying at Birkbeck. Visit our [Learning Skills module on Moodle](#) for resources that will help you build academic skills and increase academic performance.

[Ask us a question](#), call us on 020 3907 0700 or visit our [website](#) for advice and support with study skills.

Mental Health Advisory Service

We provide specialist advice and support in a safe, non-judgemental environment. Like the Counselling Service, we are here to help you when you are going through emotional or psychological difficulties. The main difference between our services is that the emphasis of our work is on practical support, rather than therapeutic interventions, to enable you to progress through your studies.

To make an appointment, please contact the Wellbeing Team from your My Birkbeck profile by clicking on 'Ask us' and selecting 'New Ask' or call us on 020 3907 0700. For further information about the service, please visit our [website](#).

Nursery Service

We understand that studying while caring for a child or children can be especially challenging and so we offer an affordable, professional evening nursery service, based in our central London campus, for children aged from two to six years.

For further information and contact details, please visit our [website](#).

Available Resources

The MyBirkbeck student portal <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/> holds lots of information that you will find useful during your programme of study, as well as your own student profile (for your contact details, timetable and module results). Some important pages are listed here:

Disability & dyslexia support http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/disability
Computing & IT support: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/professional-services/its
Birkbeck Library http://www.bbk.ac.uk/library/
Senate House Library http://www.bbk.ac.uk/library/other-libraries
Student support (includes learning support, nursery, careers, accommodation and Students union info) http://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services
Fees and financial support http://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/fee-payment
Rules and regulations relating to your MA (including the Common Award Scheme) http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies
Late work and mitigating circumstances http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/administration/assessment/coursework/mitigating-circumstances

Support

Each student is assigned a personal tutor. For advice and information you can turn to this personal tutor, to the lecturers teaching you, to your Programme Director whom you may contact by e-mail or phone. Any matters concerning the course should be taken up with the course director. You may discuss medical problems in strict confidence. You are strongly advised to maintain regular contact with your personal tutor. You may also take up issues with the Student Union. You become a member of the Union automatically as a registered Birkbeck student.

Information on the services they offer are available on their website: www.bbk.ac.uk/su or phone 020 7631 6335.

Representation

Each year, we ask for two or more students from the MA to represent your concerns to programme tutors. These representatives collate student feedback to present at a termly 'staff/student forum' meeting, where issues specific to your experience as a student on the MA in Creative Writing are discussed.

Creative Writing Staff Profiles

JULIA BELL

Reader in Creative Writing

Julia Bell is a writer of essays, poems, novels and screenplays. She is also the Course Director of the MA in Creative Writing at Birkbeck. Her recent essays can be found online at The White Review or the TLS. She divides her time between London and Berlin.

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TOBY LITT

Reader in Creative Writing

Toby Litt is the author of eight novels and four short story collections. His most recent book is *Wrestliana*, an exploration of his relationship to his great-great-great grandfather, William Litt, who was a champion wrestler, poet, novelist, and smuggler (Galley Beggar, 2018). He has also written comics including the *Dead Boy Detectives* monthly series and, in collaboration with Neil Gaiman, *Free Country: A Tale of Children's Crusade* (Vertigo, 2015). Toby was chosen as one of Granta's Best of Young British Novelists in 2003. Along with Ali Smith, he edited the *New Writing 13* anthology. He reviews for *The Guardian*, and appears regularly on Radio 3's *The Verb*. He is a member of English PEN.

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JODIE KIM

Lecturer in Creative and Critical Writing

Jodie Kim has a PhD in Creative Writing and Contemporary Literature from the University of Manchester. Her critical and creative work focus on the intersection of racial, gendered, and political violence and literature.

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KATHERINE ANGEL

Lecturer in Creative Writing

Katherine Angel is a writer of literary non-fiction. *Unmastered: A Book On Desire, Most Difficult To Tell* was published in the UK in 2012 by Penguin and in the USA by Farrar, Straus & Giroux. It was also translated into several European languages. *Daddy Issues*, a book-length essay on fathers, daughters, and feminism was published in 2019 by Peninsula Press, and *Tomorrow Sex Will Be Good Again*, an exploration of the possibility of knowledge of sexuality, and how this affects thinking about consent and sexual violence, will be published by Verso in 2020.

Katherine studied at Cambridge and Harvard universities, and has a PhD in the History and Philosophy of Science from the University of Cambridge. She has held fellowships and has taught at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels at the University of Warwick, at Queen Mary, University of London, and at Kingston University. Her research has been published in journals including *History of the Human Sciences*, *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, *Biosocieties*, and *The Lancet*. She speaks regularly about her work and with other writers at universities, cultural institutes, and art venues. She also collaborates on live art readings of her work with performance group The Blackburn Company.

At Birkbeck Katherine teaches fiction and non-fiction, at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

k.angel@bbk.ac.uk

RICHARD HAMBLYN

Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing

Richard was the inaugural Writer in Residence at the UCL Environment Institute, and his books include *The Invention of Clouds*, which won the 2002 *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize and was shortlisted for the BBC4 Samuel Johnson Prize; *Terra: Tales of the Earth* (Picador, 2009), a study of natural disasters; and *The Art of Science* (Picador, 2011), an anthology of readable science writing from the Babylonians to the Higgs boson. He has also written four illustrated books for the Met Office, and edited Daniel Defoe's first book, *The Storm*, for Penguin Classics. Richard's most recent volumes are *Tsunami: Nature and Culture* (Reaktion, 2014), a history of killer waves from the legend of Atlantis to the Fukushima disaster of 2011, and *Clouds: Nature and Culture* (Reaktion, 2017), a wide-ranging cultural history of clouds and weather. He is currently writing a book about the sea in art and culture.

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LUKE WILLIAMS

Lecturer in Creative Writing

Luke's current project is a novel, *Diego Garcia*, a collaboration with the writer Natasha Soobramanien. It will be published by Fitzcarraldo Editions in 2020, with first draft chapters appearing here: <https://diegogarciabook.tumblr.com/> Previously, his first novel *The Echo Chamber* (Hamish Hamilton, 2011) won The Saltire Award for Best First Book. Luke studied History at Edinburgh University and Creative Writing at UEA.

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STEVE WILLEY

Lecturer in Creative and Critical Writing

Steve Willey is a poet, researcher and critic, and as an organiser of several London based poetry readings (Opened, Benefits, Watadd) is committed to the development of dynamic poetry communities both in the UK and internationally.

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DAVID ELDRIDGE

Lecturer in Creative Writing

David Eldridge's plays have been performed at major new writing institutions in the UK and internationally in English and in translation. His theatre credits include: Beginning (Dorfman Theatre, National Theatre & West End); Market Boy (Olivier Theatre, National Theatre); Holy Warriors (Shakespeare's Globe); Miss Julie, The Lady from the Sea (Royal Exchange, Manchester); In Basildon, Incomplete and Random Acts of Kindness, Under the Blue Sky (Royal Court & West End); Something, Someone, Somewhere (Sixty-Six Books/Bush Theatre); MAD, Serving it Up (Bush); The Knot of the Heart (Almeida), Festen (Almeida, Lyric West End & Broadway); The Stock Da'wa, Falling (Hampstead); A Thousand Stars Explode in the Sky (with Robert Holman & Simon Stephens, Lyric Hammersmith); Babylone (Belgrade Coventry); John Gabriel Borkman, The Wild Duck, Summer Begins (Donmar Warehouse); A Week With Tony, Fighting for Breath (Finborough); Thanks Mum (Red Room); Dirty (Theatre Royal Stratford East); Cabbage for, Tea, Tea, Tea! (Platform 4 Exeter). He also writes TV, film and radio and his credits for TV include: Killers, Our Hidden Lives (BBC), The Scandalous Lady W (BBC). Short Film credits include: The Nugget Run (Zig Zag Productions). And Radio credits include: Michael and Me: Stratford, Ilford, Romford and all Stations to Shenfield; Festen; The Picture Man; Like Minded People; The Secret Grief ; John Gabriel Borkman; Jenny Lomas (BBC). Under the Blue Sky won the Time Out Live Award 2001 for Best New Play in the West End and Festen the 2005 Theatregoers Choice Award for Best New Play. The Picture Man won the Prix Europa Best European Radio Drama 2008. Under the Blue Sky won the 2009 Theatregoers Choice Award for Best New Play. The Knot of the Heart won the 2012 Off West End Theatre Award for Best New Play. In 2007 the University of Exeter conferred on David an Honorary Doctorate of Letters recognising his achievement as a playwright.

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DAVID STAFFORD

Associate Lecturer in Creative Writing

David Stafford has taught Screenwriting at Birkbeck since 2007. In the early eighties, a collaboration with the comedian Alexei Sayle resulted in two series for Capitol Radio (winner of a Sony award), a book, two records and two films for C4. Other TV plays have included *Catherine* (winner of Prix Europa), *My Little Grey Home in the West*, and *Dread Poets Society* (with Benjamin Zephaniah). More recently he has collaborated with his wife, Caroline, writing comedies and dramas, mostly for radio, including *Man of Soup*, *The Brothers*, *Hazelbeach*, *The Day the Planes Came* and the award-winning *The True and Inspirational Life Of St Nicholas*. Their biography of Lionel Bart was Radio 4 Book of the Week and was adapted as a BBC 4 TV documentary. David has also pursued a parallel career as a TV and radio presenter, working on *the Late Show*, *Tracks*, *Going Places*, *Home Truths* and many others

HANNAH COPLEY

Associate Lecturer in Creative Writing

Born in 1988 and currently living and working in Hertfordshire. Write poetry, read poetry, write about poetry, teach poetry. Lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of Westminster.

Associate lecturer in Creative Writing at Birkbeck College. Wrote a PhD on the poetry and archives of Jon Silkin, Tony Harrison and Geoffrey Hill.

Research interests include: writing pregnancy, the depiction of vulnerable bodies in literature and medical textbooks, war poetry and the contemporary creative legacy of Isaac Rosenberg and Keith Douglas, little magazines.

Poems, reviews and articles in magazines and anthologies, including *Verse Matters*, eds. Rachel Bower and Helen Mort (Valley Press).

Winner of the 2018 YorkMix/York Literature Festival Poetry Prize.

Shortlisted for Faber New Poets Prize (2015/16), Hippocrates Prize (2017). Chosen as one of the fifty Best New British and Irish Poets (Eyewear, 2018).

Poetry editor of *Mechanics' Institute Review 16* and *MIROnline*

DARRAGH MARTIN

Associate Lecturer in Creative Writing

Darragh Martin's debut novel for adults, *Future Popes of Ireland*, was published by Fourth Estate in 2018. It was short-listed for Novel of the Year at the Irish Book Awards and long-listed for the Desmond Elliot prize. Darragh's other work includes *The Keeper* (short-listed for children's book of the year at the Irish Book Awards) and the plays *An Air Balloon across Antarctica* and *Why Pluto is a Planet*. He holds a PhD in Theatre from Columbia University and is currently working on his second novel.

Contact Details

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Toby Litt	t.litt@bbk.ac.uk	310, 43 Gordon Sq	020 3073 8210
Administrative Contact Details			
Administration Team	englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk		0203 073 6166 Room G19, 43 Gordon Square

Appendix A: Term Dates and Deadlines

Autumn Term Monday 30 September to Friday 13 December 2019		Spring Term Monday 13 January 2020 to Friday 27 March 2020		Summer Term Monday 27 April 2020 to Friday 10 July 2020	
Week 1	30-Sep-19	Week 1	13-Jan-20	Week 1	27-Apr-20
Week 2	7-Oct-19	Week 2	20-Jan-20	Week 2	4-May-20
Week 3	14-Oct-19	Week 3	27-Jan-20	Week 3	11-May-20
Week 4	21-Oct-19	Week 4	3-Feb-20	Week 4	18-May-20
Week 5	28-Oct-19	Week 5	10-Feb-20	Week 5	25-May-20
Week 6	4-Nov-19	Week 6	17-Feb-20	Week 6	1-Jun-20
Week 7	11-Nov-19	Week 7	24-Feb-20	Week 7	8-Jun-20
Week 8	18-Nov-19	Week 8	2-Mar-20	Week 8	15-Jun-20
Week 9	25-Nov-19	Week 9	9-Mar-20	Week 9	22-Jun-20
Week 10	2-Dec-19	Week 10	16-Mar-20	Week 10	29-Jun-20
Week 11	9-Dec-19	Week 11	23-Mar-20	Week 11	6-Jul-20
Most services will be unavailable from 5pm on Friday 20 December 2019, re-opening at 9am on Wednesday 2 January 2019		Most services will be unavailable from Wednesday 8 April to Wednesday 15 April inclusive. Normal services will resume from 9am on Monday, 27 April 2020		Most services will be unavailable on Monday 4 May & Monday 25 May 2020	

Autumn Term	
Induction for all new MA Students	Thursday 26th September 2019
Launch Party for <i>Mechanics' Institute Review</i>	(exact date tbc)
Writing & Reading Seminar begins	Wednesday 2 October 2019
Contemporary Literature Modules begin	Week beginning 30 September 2019
Reading week no classes	Week beginning 4 November 2019

Spring Term	
Deadline for coursework	Monday 13 January 2020
Option Modules begin	Week beginning 13 January 2020
Writing Workshop begins	Wednesday 15 January 2020
Reading week no classes	Week beginning 17 February 2020

Summer Term	
Deadline for coursework	Monday 27 April 2020

Dissertation Deadline

Full-time and year 2 part-time students: Monday 14 September 2020

Year 1 part-time students: Mid-September 2020 (*exact date tbc*)

Appendix B: How to Format Your Fiction and Prose Non-Fiction

by Benjamin Wood

This document is intended to give you, the creative writing student, a general template you can refer to in order to correctly format your fiction for your assignments. It represents the standard expectations of publishers, agents, and literary journals for manuscript submissions. As you can see, the prose is **double-spaced**; in Microsoft Word, you do this by going to Format > Paragraph > Line Spacing > Double. This makes the prose easy to read, and gives your lecturer/editor ample space to write interstitial comments.

It is also **typewritten** in a **sensible font** (Gill Sans - though Times New Roman, Arial, Verdana, or Garamond are other good, sensible fonts) and in a **sensible font size** (11pt or 12pt). Further, there are **ample margins** of 2.5cm (Left), 2.5cm (Right), 2.5cm (Top) and 2.5cm (Bottom). You can alter the margins in Microsoft Word by going to Format > Document > Margins. The text can be **justified** or simply **left-aligned**. Pages should always be printed **single-sided**.

“Dialogue is indented like this,” one person said.

“And the first line of long passages of dialogue such as this, which are so long that they take up another line, are indented too,” someone replied.

In fact, **every first line of every new paragraph is indented** in this way. You can set up Microsoft Word to do this automatically by going to Format > Paragraph > Special > First Line.

When you want to indicate a large break in narrative time between scenes, you do so by leaving two paragraph spaces and left-aligning the prose, like this. (You should **only** do this when there are significant gaps in narrative time you want to imply to the reader; never do this between paragraphs of continuous action in the same scene.)

When you move onto the next paragraph, the first line should be indented again, like this. Make sure that you don't leave additional spaces between your paragraphs by adjusting your settings in MS Word. Go to: Format > Paragraph > Spacing and check the tick-box beside “Don't add space between paragraphs of the same style”, or “Remove Space After Paragraph”.

It seems like this sort of thing is not very important but, in fact, it is. Correct formatting creates the impression of professionalism, indicating to agents and editors that you are a writer who knows what you are doing.

Other things to note: **your pages should be numbered** (ideally in the bottom right-hand corner of every page). You do this in Microsoft Word by going to Insert > Page Numbers. And you should include a **word count** at the end of your manuscript. You can find out what your word count is by going to Tools > Word Count.

Happy writing!

(448 words)

Appendix C: How To Format Critical Work

by Richard Hamblyn

This document offers a template to which you can refer in order to correctly format the critical essays that you will write over the course of your degree. As you can see, the text is **double-spaced**; in Microsoft Word, you do this by going to Format > Paragraph > Line Spacing > Double. This makes the prose easy to read, and gives whoever marks it ample space to write marginal and interstitial comments. All your submitted work should be double-spaced.

When you move onto another paragraph, the first line should be indented, like this. Make sure that you don't leave additional spaces between paragraphs by adjusting your settings in MS Word. Go to: **Format > Paragraph > Spacing** and check the tick-box beside 'Don't add space between paragraphs' or, depending on which version of Word you have, 'Remove Space After/Before Paragraph.'

The essay is also typewritten in a **sensible font** (Times New Roman, Arial, Verdana, or Garamond are also sensible fonts) and in a **sensible font size** (11pt or 12pt). The text can be **left-aligned**, like this, or **right justified** if you prefer. 'Short quotations from books, articles or other sources should be in single quotation marks and run on from the main text, as in this case'.¹ Note that the final full stop lies outside the closing quotation mark, and that the footnote reference number comes at the end of the sentence, after the full stop. You can add automatically numbered footnotes in Word by going to the 'References' panel and clicking on 'Insert Footnote', and then writing the footnote in the box that appears in the page footer. Note the preferred footnote format: author name (surname last), title of article in single quotation marks, title of book in *italics* (Place of Publication: Publisher, year) in brackets, full stop after page number(s).

Longer quotations, however, should appear in separate, indented sections, with no quotation marks, such as this passage cited from Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West*:

It might seem odd that in cities teetering at the edge of the abyss young people still go to class – in this case an evening class on corporate identity and product branding – but that is the way of things, with cities as with life, for one moment we are pottering about our errands as usual and the next we are dying, and our

¹ A. N. Other, 'How to Format Your Essay', in *The Big Book of Essay Writing*, ed. by Jane Doe (London: Made-up Books, 2018), pp. 58-65 (p. 5).

eternally impending ending does not put a stop to our transient beginnings and middles until the instant that it does.²

The spaces immediately above and below the quotation have been shrunk to single space, as double-spaced spaces can leave quoted passages adrift in white space. If you are quoting often from the same story or book, subsequent quotations can be cited using page numbers at the end of the sentence: 'Saeed wanted to run but had nowhere to run to' (p. 147). This will reduce the number of footnotes in your essay, and make it easier to read.

Other things to note: **your pages should be numbered** (ideally in the top right-hand corner of every page, except page 1: in Microsoft Word go to Insert > Page Numbers, and then go to the 'Design' or 'Layout' panel and select 'Different First Page'). Your **name** should also appear on the first page: you'd be surprised how many people forget to put their name on their work.

You should also include a **bibliography** at the end of the essay, listing the sources that you have cited or referred to in the course of writing it. Note the preferred format for bibliographies: sources are listed alphabetically by author surname, followed by title and publication details, with no full stop after page numbers of articles or chapters:

Hamid, Mohsin, *Exit West* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2017)

Other, A. N., 'How to Format Your Essay', in *The Big Book of Essay Writing*, ed. by Jane Doe (London: Made-up Books, 2018), pp. 58-65

More detailed information about page layout, punctuation and grammar, along with guidance on formatting citations and bibliographies – including how to cite non-printed sources such as songs, film, audio, broadcast content, ebooks and the like – can be found in the *MHRA Style Guide* (2013), which you will find uploaded onto the Moodle pages of all core modules.

(741 words)

² Mohsin Hamid, *Exit West* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2017), pp. 1-2.

Appendix D: Extracurricular Opportunities

The Mechanics' Institute REVIEW

Get Involved!

<http://mironline.org/>

The Mechanics' Institute Review is an exciting and recently relaunched interactive web portal which aims to provide a platform for high-quality new fiction, non-fiction and poetry, as well as reviews and interviews.

This site is managed by Project Director, Julia Bell, and maintained and edited by a rotating group of Birkbeck students, alumni and staff. The Managing Editor is Melanie Jones. The current Short Fiction editor is Toby Litt. Julia Bell is the Creative Non-Fiction Editor and Stephen Willey is Poetry Editor. Submissions can be made to editor@mironline.org.

We are always looking for people to contribute reviews, blogs, stories, poems and ideas for features and interviews. We also need volunteers to help manage and develop the site, and to join the editorial committee and we have an ongoing intern programme.

Email the MIR team if you're interested in finding out more:
editor@mironline.org

Appendix E: Getting Started with Moodle

Logging in and getting started

All modules within the School of Arts use Moodle (a Virtual Learning Environment, or VLE) for circulating module information and coursework submission.

- To log in to Moodle you will need your ITS username and password, a computer with a connection to the internet and a web browser such as Internet Explorer or Firefox.
- If you are having login problems, but your password is working for other services, please change your password via the online form at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/its/password> (allow one hour after completing this form, and then log in again). If this hasn't resolved the problem please contact the ITS Helpdesk via by submitting an [Ask Query](#), telephone (020 7631 6543), or in person (Malet St building, next to the entrance to the Library).
- There is support information available in Moodle if you click on the Support menu and select 'Moodle Support for Students'.