



School of Arts

**Department of English, Theatre and Creative
Writing**

**MA Cultural and Critical Studies
Student Handbook 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 online publication, but discrepancies may still occur due to the nature of this document. For current information and updates, always refer directly to the Birkbeck College website.

Introduction

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. Birkbeck now welcomes a diverse range of students, studying both full- and part-time at undergraduate and postgraduate level. A College of the University of London since 1920, Birkbeck is still highly 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. We award undergraduate degrees in a full range of disciplines, taught in full-time and part-time modes, and we have an unusually high proportion of students following taught Masters and MPhil/PhD courses.

Department

Welcome to the [Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing](#) in the [School of Arts](#). You are joining a vibrant community of graduates, which includes over 200 MA and some 100 PhD students. We hope that you will feel at home in this intellectual community. This booklet contains the essential information about the MA Cultural and Critical Studies programme.

The Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing occupies houses in Gordon Square which are associated with the members of the Bloomsbury Group. 46 Gordon Square was the family home of Virginia Woolf, her brothers and her sister, Vanessa, until the latter's marriage to the art critic Clive Bell in 1907. It was later occupied by the economist John Maynard Keynes.

Most School of English activities take place in 43 Gordon Square, with classes also held in Russell Square and in the Main Building on Malet Street (and occasionally in other University of London buildings). The Malet Street building is where the Library, computer rooms and the student bar (fifth floor of the extension) are situated. A snack bar is located on the ground floor of 43 Gordon Square. We are close to the bars and cafés of the University of London Union, the Institute of Education and the School of Oriental and African Studies: explore the area for the environment that suits you.

We aim to provide intellectual stimulus in a supportive environment. Some students find the transition to graduate work initially disorientating, but we have a lot of experience in helping mature students with heavy commitments elsewhere successfully to manage their postgraduate studies. If you do have any difficulties, please talk to your module tutor, your personal tutor, or to the Programme Director.

Starting your Course

[Completing Your Enrolment](#)

After receiving an offer of a place on the programme, you need to enrol as soon as possible. Enrolment is completed via your My Birkbeck Profile (see information below). **You must complete your enrolment within the first 28 days of term** by setting up a payment plan, or making a contribution to your fees. **By completing your enrolment you gain access to your student profile and programme documents, as well as your timetable, reading list and Student/Library access card.**

Please ensure you read your contract of enrolment. Students who withdraw or take a break in their studies after the first two weeks will be liable for the full fees for that term. [Click here to complete your enrolment via your My Birkbeck Profile.](#)



Your [My Birkbeck Profile](#) in conjunction with [Student Services](#) is your gateway to accessing student support at Birkbeck. Quick links to the most current information on a range of services including the Birkbeck Library, Moodle, Timetables, Computing and IT Support, Career Services, Learning Support, Disability and Dyslexia Support, Counselling Service and more are listed.

My Birkbeck Profile

[My Birkbeck Profile](#) is the online facility that allows Birkbeck students to manage their relationship with Birkbeck online. You can [login](#) to your My Birkbeck Profile to check and amend your contact details, order an [ID card](#) and keep track of your financial status and grades. You will use your My Birkbeck Profile to access your module and timetable information, [Personal Tutor](#) details and [eRegister](#) record of attendance. At exam time, you will also be able to access your personal examination timetable and your results once they are published.

It is essential to access your My Birkbeck Profile on a regular basis and keep your contact details up-to-date, to facilitate communication and access between yourself and the College. Email is the standard means of communication in the School of Arts.

Click [here](#) or go to <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/my-birkbeck-profile> to login to your My Birkbeck Profile with your username and password. If you do not have your username and password, please contact ITS Reception in the main Malet Street building or by email at its-helpdesk@bbk.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can submit an [ASK query](#).

Fees, Financial Support and Payment Details

College fees may be paid by many methods. Please click [here](#) to follow the link to the College website, for the most current information on fees and payment, and [here](#) for details on financial support. Whilst we have great sympathy with students who find difficulties in paying their fees, neither the programme director nor any of your tutors have the power to waive fees or sanction delays in payment. For advice and support in relation to paying your fees, please contact the [College Income Office](#). The Income Office deals with all enquiries relating to payment of fees, including direct debit queries. Please communicate and negotiate with the College Fees Office directly if you have any fee-related queries.

Fees Policy 2019/20

You are strongly encouraged to take a look at the [Fees and Payments](#) page on the website and read the current [Fees Policy](#). Refer to these resources to answer questions such as: *What does fee liability mean? What is the last date I can enrol? and What should I do if I can't pay my fees?* Students who fail to pay their fees may become ineligible to continue the course, unable to submit assessments or access their My Birkbeck Profile. Any student who has a debt to the College at the end of the year will not have their marks relayed to them.

Postgraduate Loans

Please see the Birkbeck website [here](#) for helpful information on applying for a postgraduate loan. You can also access the [Postgraduate Loans and Enrolment: A Step-by-Step Guide](#) for assistance enrolling onto your programme.

Moodle

[Moodle](#) (Birkbeck's Virtual Learning Environment Platform) 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.

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. 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).

The Administrative Office

Please contact your Programme Administrator by phone or email to discuss any queries or to book an appointment.

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. 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.**

We are very sympathetic towards the problems encountered by students and we will do all that we can to help you through any difficulties you may have with your studies. Please do signal if you are having problems.

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 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 lecturer. Lecturers will let students know the time and place of their office hours, although you may wish to make an appointment. Email can be a convenient way to do this. Any other matters concerning the course should be taken up with your personal tutor. You will be informed of which member of the course team will act as your personal tutor at the beginning of term. You may discuss medical and pastoral problems in strict confidence.

Student Representation

Each year, we also ask for two student representatives from the MA to represent your concerns to a staff-student committee. These representatives raise issues specific to your experience as an MA Cultural and Critical student at Birkbeck. We'll ask you to nominate representatives during the autumn term.

Key personnel

Dr Agnes Woolley, Programme Director
020 7631 6180 a.woolley@bbk.ac.uk

For programme administration, please contact:
englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk

Term Dates

Autumn Term Monday 30 September to Friday 13 December 2019		Spring Term Monday 13 January to Friday 27 March 2020		Summer Term Monday 27 April to Friday 10 July 2020	
Week 1	30-Sept-19	Week 1	13-Jan-20	Week 1	27-Apr-20
Week 2	07-Oct-19	Week 2	20-Jan-20	Week 2	04-May-20
Week 3	14-Oct-19	Week 3	27-Jan-20	Week 3	11-May-20
Week 4	21-Oct-19	Week 4	03-Feb-20	Week 4	18-May-20
Week 5	28-Oct-19	Week 5	10-Feb-20	Week 5	25-May-20
Reading Week	04-Nov-19	Reading Week	17-Feb-20	Reading Week	01-Jun-20
Week 7	11-Nov-19	Week 7	24-Feb-20	Week 7	08-Jun-20
Week 8	18-Nov-19	Week 8	02-Mar-20	Week 8	15-Jun-20
Week 9	25-Nov-19	Week 9	09-Mar-20	Week 9	22-Jun-20
Week 10	02-Dec-19	Week 10	16-Mar-20	Week 10	29-Jun-20
Week 11	09-Dec-19	Week 11	23-Mar-20	Week 11	06-Jul-20
College will close at 6pm on Friday 20 December, and normal services will resume from 9am on Thursday 2 January 2020. Check for Library opening hours.		College will close at 6pm on 08 April, and normal services will resume from 9am on 15 April. Check for Library opening hours.		04 and 25 of May are Bank Holidays. If classes fall on these dates, they may be rescheduled.	
<p>Please note: Week 6 each term is Reading Week – no classes are held during Reading Week unless specified by your module convenor.</p> <p>Click here for full term dates and holiday closures.</p> <p>Students are reminded that it is inadvisable to take holidays during term time.</p>					

Programme Description, Aims and Learning Outcomes

The MA in Cultural and Critical Studies explores cultural debates and questions of critical theory across disciplines and through the examination of work in a range of media - for example, film, photography, digital media, literature, and music. The course is designed to provide a grounding in the theoretical debates that inform contemporary investigations in a number of areas such as modernity, politics, identity, globalisation, digitalisation, ideology, forms of culture, society, subjectivity, ethnicity, gender, aesthetics, the everyday and cultural history. The insights, methods and analyses of nineteenth-, twentieth- and twenty-first-century forms of critique – such as Marxism, Critical Theory, Cultural Studies, psychoanalysis, deconstruction, postcolonial critique – are explored and applied. The course engages with old and new technologies, a variety of cultural forms and the recent forms of enquiry that have transformed the traditional disciplines. It studies the questions of reification and fetishism, theories of subjectivity and objecthood, visual perception and technologies of the gaze, the politics of sexuality, the 'everyday' and the 'spectacle', technology, the organisation of knowledge, questions of high and low culture, sensory perception, the notion of tradition and questions of cultural production and reproduction. A flexible modular scheme of option courses and independent research allows students to work on themes and problems in past and present theories, media and practices.

The aim of the course is to provide an introduction to and exploration of cultural and critical studies, with a diverse range of advanced options offering scope to configure a programme of study that meets individual needs. At the end of the course students will have gained knowledge predominantly of aspects of twentieth- and twenty-first century cultural and critical theory and an understanding of the historical context in which ideas develop. Students will be able to:

- Structure an understanding of various cultures and societies in the context of prevailing theoretical debates, thus reiterating the arrangement of theory and local knowledge.
- Read texts closely and critically and fathom arguments in close co-ordination with practice and experience.
- Choose original examples with which to interrogate and question theories and methods of enquiry.
- Consider a certain topic from a variety of viewpoints and to evaluate which of these is most appropriate.
- Communicate and discuss difficult ideas and engage with questions in front of audience and peers.

- Articulate a sustained line of argument in different types of writing.
- Identify a field of research and locate relevant readings through enhanced bibliographic research skills.
- Where appropriate, retrieve archival materials and engage in other types of primary research (such as interviews) with enhanced skills of data gathering.

Programme Structure

Part-time Study

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year One	Core Module 1 Mondays: 6-9pm ENHU003S7 Key Concepts in Cultural and Critical Studies: Part 1	Option Module 1 	Project Presentations
Year Two	Core Module 2 Thursdays: 6-7.30pm ENHU004S7 Key Concepts in Cultural and Critical Studies: Part 2	Option Module 2 Dissertation Topic is due by Friday 05 March 2021 Preliminary consultation with dissertation supervisor by end of spring term	Project Presentations and Dissertation Submission of Dissertation: due Friday 10 September 2021

Full-time Study

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year One	Core Module 1 Mondays: 6-9pm ENHU003S7 Key Concepts in Cultural and Critical Studies: Part 1 Core Module 2 Thursdays: 6-7.30pm ENHU004S7 Key Concepts in Cultural and Critical Studies: Part 2	Option Module 1 Option Module 2 Dissertation Topic is due by Friday 06 March 2020 Preliminary consultation with dissertation supervisor by end of spring term	Project Presentations and Dissertation Submission of Dissertation: due Friday 11 September 2020

Over the course of the degree the students complete:

- **Two core modules: Key Concepts in Critical and Cultural Studies (Autumn)**
- **Two option modules (Spring)**
- **A set of activities, which include dissertation research skills sessions and project presentations by students (Summer)**
- **A Dissertation: 15 000 words (submitted in Summer)**

Most teaching is by seminar. The emphasis is on discussion, debate and the sharing and exploration of ideas. Core Course seminars take place on Monday evenings, 6.00-7.30 pm and (for full-time or second year part-time students) Thursday evenings, 6.00-7.30pm, in the Autumn Term. These will be followed by less formal sessions – which we call 'Second Half Sessions' – on selected Mondays at 7.40-9.00pm. Year One and Year Two students are strongly encouraged to attend these sessions (see more information below). These sessions are enhanced by a student-led MA Cultural and Critical Studies Reading Group, which usually meets one evening a week in Autumn term (see more information below). Students may wish to change the evening in Spring term due to options taking place on different nights. Summer term sessions will be announced closer to the time, but are likely to take place on Wednesdays.

Regular attendance at the Core course and Option course seminars is expected. A class register is circulated to monitor attendance. If you have to miss a class, please make sure you inform the Programme Administrator or your seminar tutor. For extended periods of absence due to illness, a medical certificate will be required. Attendance is a course requirement and failure to attend a substantial proportion of a course without medical certification may lead to failing the course.

If you are experiencing difficulty attending seminars or keeping up with course requirements, for whatever reasons, please discuss this with the Programme Director, who will be able to make helpful suggestions and give practical advice. In Birkbeck, we have a lot of experience of the difficulties that students face when they combine a rigorous programme of study with the busy everyday lives of work and family. We therefore endeavour to be responsive to student needs and flexible whenever possible.

Normally students will not be permitted to transfer courses after the start of term except under exceptional circumstances.

Assessment Schedule for 2019-20

Deadlines

Autumn Term

- **Friday 08 November 2019** (14:00 electronic submission)
Core 1 Compulsory Critical Bibliography: 2000-word commentary on 4-6 pieces of Core 1 reading

Spring Term

- **Monday 13 January 2020** (14:00 electronic submission)
Core 1 essay
- **Monday 13 January 2020** (14:00 electronic submission)
Core 2 essay
- **Friday 06 March 2020** (14:00 electronic submission)
In the second half of the Spring Term: full-time and part-time year 2 students will be asked to submit their Dissertation title and abstract (see Appendix D).

Summer term

- **Monday 27 April 2020** (14:00 electronic submission)
Spring Option Essays*
- **Friday 11 September 2020** (14:00 electronic submission)
Dissertation due for Full-time students and part-time year 2

*Please note: this date is subject to change depending upon your module choice.

Core Module 1: Key Concepts in Cultural and Critical Studies 1 (ENHU003S7)

Core 1 runs in the Autumn term, Mondays, 6.00–7.30pm. This module is taken by Part-Time students in Year 1 and by Full-Time Students.

Module Convenor: Dr Agnes Woolley (a.woolley@bbk.ac.uk)

Module Tutors: Dr Stephen Clucas (s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk) and Professor Esther Leslie (e.leslie@bbk.ac.uk)

Module Code: ENHU003S7

Module Level: 7

Timetable: Monday 6-7.30pm, Autumn Term

Week 1 - Induction

This session is a plenary and all students (part-time and full-time) will convene for a general introduction to the course and its structure.

The following readings will all be useful, though are not essential:

Hall, Stuart, 'Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies' in Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson and Paula Treichler (eds). *Cultural Studies* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 277-286. Available online:

<https://msuweb.montclair.edu/~furrq/pursuits/hallcultstuds.html>

Connor, Steven, 'What Can Cultural Studies Do?', in *Interrogating Cultural Studies: Interviews in Cultural Theory, Practice and Politics*, ed. Paul Bowman (London: Pluto Press, 2003). Available online: <http://www.stevenconnor.com/interview/>

Latour, Bruno, 'Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern', *Critical Inquiry*, 30 (2004), 225–248.

BLOCK A: Of Culture and Criticism

Dr Stephen Clucas (s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk)

This block will examine questions of criticism and culture in their historical and political formation.

Week 2: What is Culture?

This seemingly innocuous question will be probed in order to discover some of the debates and discussions around the term culture. The primary work of this session is to gather information on types of culture: high, low, mass, popular, global, human, non-human, and to consider all these in relation to questions of theory.

Seminar Texts:

Williams, Raymond, 'Culture' in *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976), revised edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 87-93 and 236-8.

Huyssen, Andreas, 'High/Low in an Expanded Field', *Modernism/modernity*, 9:3 (2002), 363-374.

Further Reading:

Bernstein, J. M., *The Fate of Art: Aesthetic Alienation from Kant to Derrida and Adorno* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992).

Buchloh, Benjamin, Hal Foster, Andrea Fraser, David Joselit, Krauss Rosalind, et al. 'Round Table: The Present Conditions of Art Criticism', *October*, 100 (Spring 2002) pp. 200-228.

Grossberg, Lawrence, et al, eds, *Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 1992)

Lütticken, Sven, *Secret Publicity: Essays on Contemporary Culture* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2006).

Smith, Philip Daniel, *Cultural Theory: An Introduction* (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008).

Week 3: What is Criticism?

This session considers the outlines of three types of criticism, Enlightenment criticism, Romantic criticism and dialectical criticism, and the relationship between 'critical theory' as it was defined by the Frankfurt School and more traditional forms of criticism.

Seminar Texts:

Adorno, Theodor W., 'Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft' ['Cultural Criticism and Society'] (1949) in *Prisms*, edited by Samuel and Shierry Weber (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981, reprinted), pp. 13-34.

Benjamin, Walter, 'The Task of the Critic' [c.1931], in *Walter Benjamin, Selected Writings, Volume 2 1927-1934* (London and Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 548-9.

Further Reading:

Beaumont, Matthew and Terry Eagleton, *The Task of the Critic* (London: Verso, 2009).

Horkheimer, Max, 'Traditional and Critical Theory' (1937), in *Critical Sociology*, edited by Paul Connerton (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976), pp. 206-224.

Jameson, Fredric, *Valences of the Dialectic* (London: Verso, 2010)

Jay, Martin, *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, 1923-1950* (Boston & Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1973), esp. pp. 41-85 ('The Genesis of Critical Theory').

Marcuse, Herbert, 'Philosophy and Critical Theory' (1937), in *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory*, translated by Jeremy J. Shapiro (London: Allen Lane – The Penguin Press, 1968), pp. 134-158.

Week 4: Culture in Tatters

This session looks at how Walter Benjamin's unfinished 'Arcades project' attempted to mobilise the cultural fragments of post-industrial Paris in order to forge a dialectical critique. Using the commentaries of George Dillon and Susan Buck-Morss we will consider the future possibilities of a cultural analysis which works by the juxtaposition and mobilization of material-cultural fragments.

Seminar Texts:

Benjamin, Walter, 'First Sketches', in *The Arcades Project*, translated by Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 827-887.

Buck-Morss, Susan, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 1989), Ch. 5 'Mythic Nature: Wish Image', pp. 110-158.

Dillon, George L. 'Montage/Critique: Another Way of Writing Social

History', *Postmodern Culture*, 14:2 (January 2004) Available online at: <http://faculty.washington.edu/dillon/rhethtml/crmontage/>

Further Reading

Frisby, David, *Fragments of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985)
Kracauer, Siegfried, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, translated and edited by Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).
McCracken, Scott, 'The Completion of Old Work: Walter Benjamin and the Everyday', *Cultural Critique*, 52, (Fall 2002):145-166 (J-Stor).
Stallabrass, Julian, 'Trash' in *Gargantua: Manufactured Mass Culture* (London and New York: Verso, 1996), pp. 171-188.
For more Benjamin resources see: <http://www.wbenjamin.org/walterbenjamin.html>

Week 5: After 'After Auschwitz': Critical Pessimism and Beyond

This session considers the bleak post-war scene of cultural and critical pessimism, as voiced by Theodor Adorno, after Auschwitz. It looks at a limit case in order to reflect on contemporary possibilities for culture and criticism. We also look at Jacques Rancière's recent attempt to insist upon a viable radical future for critical theory beyond 'left wing melancholy' and its adversaries.

Seminar Texts:

Adorno, Theodor W., 'Meditations on Metaphysics. 1. After Auschwitz and 2. Metaphysics and Culture', in *Negative Dialectics* [1966], translated by E. B. Ashton (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), pp. 361-8.
(This is also available in another translation Dennis Redmond, which is available online: <http://members.efn.org/~dredmond/nd5.PDF>)
Adorno, Theodor W., *Aesthetic Theory*, translated by Robert Hullot-Kentor, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), pp. 404-5.
Rancière, Jacques, 'The Misadventures of Critical Thought', in *The Emancipated Spectator*, translated by Gregory Elliott (London and New York: 2009), pp. 25-49.

Further Reading:

Adorno, Theodor W., *The Jargon of Authenticity* (Allentown: Northwestern University Press, 1973)
TW Adorno, *Minima Moralia, Reflections from Damaged Life*. (London: Verso, 1974)
Terry Eagleton, 'Art After Auschwitz, Theodor Adorno', in Eagleton, Terry, *Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990)
Huysen, Andreas, *The Politics of Identification in After the Great Divide; Modernism, Mass Culture and Postmodernism*, (London: Macmillan 1986)
Kushner, Tony, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994)
Menke, Christoph, *The Sovereignty of Art: Aesthetic Negativity in Adorno and Derrida*, trans. Neil Solomon (London and Cambridge Mass: MIT Press, 1998).
Osborne, Peter, ed., *From an Aesthetic Point of View (Prisms)* (London: Serpent's Tail, 2001)
Young, James E., *Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust*, (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1988)
For a collection of Adorno's writings on the question of criticism and poetry after Auschwitz see *Can One Live after Auschwitz?: A Philosophical Reader*, edited by Rolf Tiedemann (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).

Week 6 Reading Week: No Class

BLOCK B – New Directions in Cultural Theory

Professor Esther Leslie (e.leslie@bbk.ac.uk)

In this block we will examine some of the most pressing questions facing cultural critics in the contemporary with a view to expanding and updating our field of reference. Each week presents a discreet approach to key categories through which we might approach culture: new materialism, media, technology, dispersion; the anthropocene and aesthetics.

Week 7: Data Worlds and Cloud Computing

A new cloud atlas? What sort of a cloud is 'The Cloud'?

Seminar texts:

Mattern, Shannon, 'Cloud and Field: On the resurgence of "field guides" in a networked age.' Available here: <https://placesjournal.org/article/cloud-and-field/?cn-reloaded=1&cn-reloaded=1>

Franklin, Seb, 'Cloud Control, or The Network as Medium', *Cultural Politics*, Volume 8, Issue 3, November 2012, pp. 443-464

Further Reading:

Bianco, Jamie Skye, 'Social Networking and Cloud Computing: Precarious Affordances for the "Prosumer"', *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly*, Volume 37, Numbers 1 & 2, Spring/Summer 2009, pp. 303-312

Carruth, Allison, ('The Digital Cloud and the Micropolitics of Energy', in a *Public Culture* special issue on 'Visualizing the Environment in the Anthropocene' 26.2 (2014).

Dalton, Ben, 'Zines in the Age of Big Data', <http://www.thesuperposition.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Zines-in-the-Age-of-Big-Data.pdf>

Hu, Tung-Hui, *The Pre-history of the Cloud*, MIT, 2016

Week 8: Media, Technology, Dispersion

Seminar reading:

Barad, Karen, 'Troubling time/s and ecologies of nothingness: re-turning, re-membering, and facing the incalculable', *new formations: a journal of culture/theory/politics*, Volume 92, pp. 56-86.

Beller, Jonathan, 'The Fourth Determination', *Eflux*, Journal #85 - October 2017.

Available here: <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/85/156818/the-fourth-determination/>

Further reading

Schonig, Jordan, 'Contingent Motion: Rethinking the "Wind in the Trees" in Early Cinema and CGI', *Discourse*, Volume 40, Number 1, Winter 2018, pp. 30-61

Disco, Tan Lin, 'Cybernetics, and the Migration of Warhol's Shadows into Computation', *Criticism*, Vol. 56, No. 3, Andy Warhol (Summer 2014), pp. 481-524

Week 9: The Anthropocene

Seminar reading:

Crutzen, Paul, Eugene F. Stoermer, 'Have we Entered the Anthropocene?', *IGBP Global Change Newsletter* 41 (2000), available online:

<http://www.igbp.net/news/opinion/opinion/haveweenteredtheanthropocene.5.d8b4c3c12bf3be638a8000578.html>

Haraway, Donna, 'Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin', *Environmental Humanities* 6 (2015), 159–165. Available online: <http://environmentalhumanities.org/arch/vol6/6.7.pdf>

Morton, Timothy, 'Poisoned Ground: Art and Philosophy in the Time of Hyperobjects', *symplōke* 21, (2013), 37-50.

Yusoff, Kathryn, *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None*, University of Minnesota, 2019

Further reading:

Chakrabarty Dipesh, 'The Climate of History: Four Theses', *Critical Inquiry* 35 (Winter 2009), 197–222.

Clark, Timothy, 'The Anthropocene: Questions of Definition', in *Ecocriticism on the Edge: The Anthropocene as a Threshold Concept* (Bloomsbury: 2015), pp. 1–19.

Davies, Jeremy, *The Birth of the Anthropocene* (California University Press, 2016)

Garrard, Greg, *The Oxford Handbook of Ecocriticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014)

Latour, Bruno, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

- 'Modes of Existence, <http://modesofexistence.org/>

Malm, Andreas, *Fossil Capital: The Rise of Steam Power and the Roots of Global Warming*, Verso, London, 2016

O-Zone: <http://o-zone-journal.org/issue-1-short-essay-cluster>

Week 10: New Aesthetics

Seminar reading:

Andersen, Christian Ulrik, and Søren Bro Pold, 'Aesthetics of the Banal: 'New Aesthetics' in an Era of Diverted Digital Revolutions' in David Berry and Michael Dieter eds, *Postdigital Aesthetics: Art, Computation and Design* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 271-288.

Bridle, James, 'The New Aesthetic' (2011). Available online: <http://jamesbridle.com/works/the-new-aesthetic>

Greif, Mark, 'What was the Hipster,' in *Against Everything* (New York, London: Penguin Random House, 2016), pp. 211-224.

Moten, Fred, 'The Blur and Breathe Books: A Lecture by Fred Moten', online at: <https://vimeo.com/159219381>

Further reading:

Andrews, Ian, 'Post-digital Aesthetics and the return to Modernism' (2002). Available online: <http://www.ian-andrews.org/texts/postdig.html>

Cascone, Kim, 'The Aesthetics of Failure: 'Post-Digital' Tendencies in Contemporary Computer Music', *Computer Music Journal* 24:4 (Winter 2002), 12-18.

Contreras-Koterbay, Scott, Łukasz Mirocha, *The New Aesthetic and Art: Constellations of the Postdigital* (Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures, 2016)

Cramer, Florian, 'Post-Digital Aesthetics' (1 May 2013), *Jeu de Paume*. Available online: <http://lemagazine.jeudepaume.org/2013/05/florian-cramer-post-digital-aesthetics/>

Foster, Hal, *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (New York, NY: The New Press, 2002)

Ngai, Sianne, *Our Aesthetic Categories: Zany, Cute, Interesting* (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

Core Module 2: Key Concepts in Cultural and Critical Studies 2 (ENHU004S7)

Full-time and Year 2 part-time students take Core 2 on Thursdays 6.00-7.30pm

Module Convenor: Agnes Woolley, a.woolley@bbk.ac.uk

Module Tutor: Leah Sidi, l.sidi@bbk.ac.uk

Module Code: ENHU004S7

Module Level: 7

Timetable: Thursday 6-7.20pm, Autumn Term

BLOCK C: Technology and Cultural Theory

This block focuses on a series of important topics examining the convergence of technology and cultural theory. By examining technological, political, and cultural change, we will consider how 20th and 21st century theory has interpreted the relationship between the human and the technologically saturated contemporary world. This interdisciplinary module forms links with history, science, and philosophy while maintaining a firm focus on cultural theory. The diverse range of topics will encourage students over the five-week block to debate and explore increasingly poignant ontological issues of the present and future world.

General Reading

Arthur, W. B., 'Does Technology Evolve?', *Edge* (September 21 2009)

<<http://www.edge.org/conversation/does-technology-evolve>> [accessed 19 January 2012]

——— *The Nature of Technology. What It Is and How It Evolves* (London: Penguin, 2010)

Bauer, Martin, ed., *Resistance to New Technology: Nuclear Power, Information Technology and Biotechnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997)

Clark, Andy, *Natural-Born Cyborgs. Minds, Technologies, and the Future of Human Intelligence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

Dusek, Val, *The Philosophy of Technology: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006)

Goody, Alex, *Technology, Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011).

Fukuyama, Francis, *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution* (London: Profile, 2003)

Haraway, Donna J., 'A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century', in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, by Donna J. Haraway (Oxon: Routledge, 1991), pp. 149-82

——— *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan@_Meets_OncoMouse™* (London: Routledge, 1997)

Hayles, N. Katherine, *How We Became Posthuman* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

Harrington, Jan L., *Technology and Society* (London: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 2009)

- Jones, Steve E., *Against Technology: From the Luddites to Neo Luddism* (London: Routledge, 2006)
- Kurzweil, Ray, *The Singularity is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology* (London: Gerald Duckworth, 2006)
- Kline, Stephan J., 'What is Technology', *Bulletin of Science Technology & Society*, 1.215 (1985), 215-18 <<http://bst.sagepub.com/content/5/3/215.citation>> [accessed 07 December 2013]
- MacGowan, Christopher, *The Twentieth-Century American Fiction Handbook* (London: Blackwell, 2011)
- McCarthy, John, and Peter Wright, *Technology and Experience* (London: MIT, 2004)
- Murphie, Andrew, and John Potts, *Culture and Technology* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003)
- Porush, David, 'Technology and Postmodernism: Cybernetic Fiction', *SubStance*, 9.2 (1980), 92-100
- Spiegel-Rösing, Ina, and Derek de Solia Price, eds, *Science, Technology and Society: A Cross Disciplinary Perspective* (London: Sage, 1977), pp. 355-93
- Stone, Allucquère R., *The War of Desire and Technology at the Close of the Mechanical Age* (London: MIT Press, 1996)
- Tolan, Fiona, *New Directions: Writing Post 1990* (London: Pearson Longman, 2010)

Week 1: Art and Reproducibility

In this introductory section, we start the unit with Walter Benjamin and examine his canonical 'The Work of Art' essay. The intent is for this seminar to connect back to your reading on the Frankfurt school.

Primary reading:

Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility', in *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility, and Other Writings on Media*, ed. by Michael W. Jennings et al (London: Harvard University Press, 2008), pp. 19-55

Week 2: The Technological Sublime and Enframing

For David Nye the technological sublime is the magnificence of geographical, industrial, or architectural structures, which conjure strong emotional responses, typically feelings of fascination, pleasure, or pain. In the work of Martin Heidegger, enframing can be defined as 'an apparatus' or 'skeleton' through which to view the natural world. While Heidegger is not opposed to technology itself, he challenges human reliance on it and how it disguises 'the truth of Being' and harms the relationship between the human and the authentic world. How Nye's work on the sublime supports or challenges Martin Heidegger's early work on technological enframing will be discussed.

Primary reading:

Nye, David, 'Atomic Bomb and Apollo XI: New Forms of the Dynamic Sublime', in *American Technological Sublime* (Massachusetts: MIT, 1994), pp. 225-257. [Also suggest you read the introduction pp. xi-1]

Heidegger, Martin, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. by William Lovitt (London: Harper and Row, 1977), pp. 3-36

Further reading:

Guignon, Charles B., *Cambridge Companion to Heidegger* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011)

Irwin, William, *The "Matrix" and Philosophy: Welcome to the Desert of the Real* (Illinois: Open Court, 2002)

Raffoul, Francois, and Eric S. Nelson, eds, *The Bloomsbury Companion to Heidegger* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013)

Week 3: Communication and Control in Animal and Machine: Cybernetics

The cybernetic movement (as it is now known) emerged in 1948 and concerned the study of the processes and behaviours of organic and artificial systems. Cybernetics argues that everything is under the control of a working system. This week, focusing on the Norbert Wiener, we will examine the idea of cybernetic 'system control' and how this was being depicted in understandings of both human behaviour and machine development. Why did this movement develop? What does the cybernetics theory suggest about technology, science, and state in the mid-twentieth century? How was behaviour being reconsidered with this advance? Without delving into the mathematics behind the theory, we will examine the ways in which cybernetics reconsidered the relationship between human and machine.

Primary reading:

Bowker, Geof, 'How to Be Universal: Some Cybernetic Strategies, 1943-70', *Social Studies of Science*, 23.1 (1993), 107-27

Wiener, Norbert, 'Cybernetics', *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 3.7 (1950), 2-4

——— 'Cybernetics in History', *The Human Use of Human Beings: Cybernetics and Society* (London: Free Association Books, 1989), pp. 8-27 [the introduction is also useful] ——— 'Some Communication Machines and Their Future', *The Human Use of Human Beings: Cybernetics and Society* (London: Free Association Books, 1989), pp. 163-187

Further reading:

George, F. H., *Cybernetics* (Kent: Hodder & Staughton, 1981) Harrington, Jan L., *Technology and Society* (London: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 2009) [I suggest reading the introductions to these texts and avoiding the mathematics]

Horkheimer, Max, 'The Authoritarian State', *Telos*, 15 (1973)

Trask, Maurice, *The Story of Cybernetics* (London: Studio Vista, 1971)

Wiener, Norbert, *Cybernetics: Or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1980) [I suggest reading the introductions to these texts and avoiding the mathematics]

Week 4: Medium and Reproduction

Looking at Marshall McLuhan's idea of 'vanishing point' and 'global village', we will explore how human *presence* has altered with the advent of new technologies. With contemporary discussions of augmented reality and virtual reality, it seems to be evident that what we call 'reality' is under pressure in the contemporary world. For Jean Baudrillard, who we will be discussing this week, the disappearance of 'the real' is a

direct result of living in 'the era of murder by simulation'. Baudrillard conceives of four levels of simulation that are progressively more dangerous than the last. For Baudrillard, the most pressing concern of our times is 'the production and reproduction of the real'. How has technological development and cultural theory challenged the idea of the 'real' and 'authentic'?

Primary reading:

Jean Baudrillard, 'The Precession of Simulacra', in *Simulacra and Simulations*, by Jean Baudrillard, trans. by Shelia Faria Glaser (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2012), pp. 1-41

Blake, Heidi, 'Avatar fans suicidal because planet Pandora is not real', *Telegraph* (13 January 7 2010) <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/film/film-news/6977817/Avatar-fans-suicidal-because-planet-Pandora-is-not-real.html>> [accessed 01 January 2013]

McLuhan, Marshall, *The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects* (Madera: Gingko Press, 2001)

Further reading:

Baudrillard, Jean, *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*, trans. by Paul Patton (NSW: Power Publications, 2009)

——— *The Perfect Crime*, trans. by Chris Turner (London: Verso, 1996)

——— *The Vital Illusion*, ed. by Julia Witwer (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000)

Coyne, Richard, 'Heidegger and Virtual Reality: The Implications of Heidegger's Thinking for Computer Representations', *Leonardo*, 27.1 (1994), 65-73

Immersed in Media. Telepresence in Everyday Life, ed. by Cheryl Campanella Bracken and Paul D. Skalski (New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 183-96

Horrocks, Christopher, 'Marshall McLuhan and Virtuality', in *The End of Everything*, ed. by Richard Appignanesi (Cambridge: Icon Books, 2003), pp. 189-240

McLuhan, Marshall, *The Gutenberg Galaxy. The Making of Typographic Man* (London: Routledge, 1971)

——— *Understanding Media* (London: Routledge, 2008)

Lane, Richard J., *Baudrillard*, 2nd edn (New York: Routledge, 2009)

Stone, Allucquère R., 'Will the Real Body Please Stand Up?', in *Cyberspace: First Steps*, ed. by Michael Benedikt (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), pp. 81-118

Week 5: Posthumanism and Singularity

Posthumanity partly concerns our anxieties and enthusiasm for both technological and human evolution. The word 'post' suggests the death of the former biological template through the superseding of another. The notion that technological progression is moving towards a revolutionary event is widely articulated in the 'Technological Singularity' – a concept fixed by Vernor Vinge in the 1990s. The Singularity could manifest through one of the following breakthroughs: artificial intelligence, intelligent networks, the merging of organic and artificial 'interfaces', and biological engineering. How does cultural theory deal with the convergence of biological and technological evolution? How does cultural theory help us examine contemporary issues within cultural experience? When did the posthuman happen? Will the term 'human' be relevant in the future?

Primary reading:

Braidotti, Rosi, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013), p. 1-55

Kurzweil, Ray, 'The Future of Machine–Human Intelligence', *THE FUTURIST* (March-April 2006) <<http://www.singularity.com/KurzweilFuturist.pdf>> [accessed 06 November 2012], pp. 39-46

Smith-Windsor, Jaimie, 'The Cyborg Mother: A Breached Boundary', *CTheory.net* (4 February 2004) <www.ctheory.net/articles.aspx?id=409> [accessed 13 March 2013]

Further reading:

Baxi, Upendra, *Human Rights in a Posthuman World: Critical Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)

Clark, Andy, *Natural-Born Cyborgs. Minds, Technologies, and the Future of Human Intelligence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003)

Kurzweil, Ray, *The Singularity is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology* (London: Gerald Duckworth, 2006)

Fukuyama, Francis, *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution* (London: Profile, 2003)

Haraway, Donna J., 'A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in The Late Twentieth Century', in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, by Donna J. Haraway (Oxon: Routledge, 1991), pp. 149-82

Hayles, N. Katherine., *How We Became Posthuman* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1999)

Pepperell, Robert, *The Posthuman Condition: Consciousness Beyond the Brain* (Bristol: Intellect, 2003)

Wolfe, Cary, *What Is Posthumanism?* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010)

Week 6: Reading Week: no class

BLOCK D: Globalization and its Discontents

The later twentieth century and the beginnings of the twenty-first century have been characterized by profound changes in social structures and distribution of political and cultural power. Late capitalism in dominant western cultures and the increasing industrialization in the developing world have created the process we now know as globalization. Knowledge of the theories of globalization is essential to the critical vocabularies of cultural analysis and this block will introduce students to some of the central concepts and debates which have emerged in studies of globalization.

Tracing the path of globalization through various central and related terms – postmodernism, postcolonialism, neoliberalism – the block will explore the politics of globalization in the context of various anti-globalization movements, including the current wave of resistance to globalization that is arguably shaping our contemporary moment. We will then go on to analyse the implications of modes of activist engagement and resistance via the most globalized of mediums, the digital; and conclude by exploring the fallout from globalization with respect to one of its potentially most catastrophic arenas – the environment and climate change.

A note on weekly readings: each week we will read several texts, but the key text(s) of the week has been highlighted below; please prioritize reading the key text(s), although all texts will be discussed during the seminar. Where possible, primary readings will be made available as electronic versions on Moodle.

Week 7: Globalization and the postmodern

Theories of the so-called postmodern age tell us that the coordinates that have shaped thought and material experience in the west – time and space – have changed dramatically in the later twentieth century. This session will introduce the block by exploring how our concepts of time and space have changed, and the implications this has for thinking about cultural politics against the national and the global horizons.

Primary reading

Key text:

David Harvey, 'Individual spaces and times in social life,' 'Time and space as sources of social power' and 'Time-space compression and the postmodern condition,' in *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1990; Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 211-225; 226-239; 284-307.

Please also look at:

Arjun Appadurai, 'Disjunction and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy,' in *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 27-47.

Michael Denning, 'Globalization and Culture: Process and Epoch,' in *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds* (London: Verso, 2004), 17-34.

Further reading

Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift, eds, *Thinking Space* (London: Routledge, 2000).

Mike Featherstone, 'Genealogies of the Global,' *Theory, Culture & Society*, 23:2-3 (2006), 387-92.

Mike Featherstone et al., eds, *Global Modernities* (London: Sage, 1995).

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

Brian Heaphy, 'Late Modernity and the Reflexive Turn', in *Late Modernity and Social Change* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 69-92.

Jonathan Xavier Inda & Renato Rosaldo, eds, *The Anthropology of Globalization* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008).

Frederic Jameson and Misao Miyoshi, eds, *The Cultures of Globalization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998).

A.D King, ed., *Culture, Globalisation and the World-System* (London: Macmillan, 1991).

Frank Lechner and John Boli, eds, *The Globalization Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).

Henri Lefebvre, 'Contradictory Space,' in *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 292-351.

Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd, eds, *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).

Andy Merrifield, *Henri Lefebvre: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2006).
News from Nowhere, *We Are Everywhere: The Irresistible Rise of Global Anticapitalism* (London: Verso, 2003).
Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: Sage, 1992).
Saskia Sassen, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: The New Press, 1998).
Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake, eds, *Global/Local: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginary* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).

Week 8: Globalization and the postcolonial

The session will examine the politics of globalization via the relationship between globalization and the postcolonial, and within the context of theories of US imperialism. In particular, we will be thinking about these issues in relation to feminist politics and recent events in the Middle East that began with the 'Arab Spring' in 2011.

Primary reading

Key texts:

Avtar Brah, 'Diaspora, Border, and Transnational Identities', in *Cartographies of Diaspora* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1996), 178-210.

Hamid Dabashi, 'The Arab Spring: The End of Postcoloniality' and 'Decentering the World: How the Arab Spring Unfolded', in *The Arab Spring: The End of Postcolonialism* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 1-16; 17-40.

Please also look at:

Arif Dirlik, 'The Global in the Local,' in *The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism* (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1997), 84-104.

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, 'Preface', 'Network Power: US Sovereignty and the New Empire' and 'The Multitude Against Empire' in *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), xi-xvii, 160-182 and 393-413.

S. Sayyid, 'Preface to the Second Edition: Islamism and the Postcolonial Condition', *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2003), vii-xxiii.

Further reading

Kwame Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates, Jr, eds, *Identities* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (New York: Norton, 2006).

Alain Baidou, 'Riots and the West', *The Rebirth of History: Times of Riots and Uprisings*, trans. Gregory Elliott (London and New York: Verso, 2012), 44-53.

Stuart Hall, 'The Global and the Local: Globalisation and Ethnicity,' in A.D. King, ed., *Culture, Globalisation and the World-System* (London: Macmillan, 1991).

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, 'Under Western Eyes Revisited: Feminist Solidarity Through Anti-Capitalist Struggles,' *Signs*, 28:2 (2003).

Roland Robertson, 'Globalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity', in Mike Featherstone et al., eds, *Global Modernities* (London: Sage, 1995).

Stan Smith, ed., *Globalisation and its Discontents* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2006).

Gayatri Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

Week 9: Globalization and neoliberalism

This session will explore the consequences of the transformation in global capital that ensued from the mid-1970s onwards, that many argue inaugurated a new phase of capitalism: neoliberalism. We will explore theories of neoliberalism and the neoliberal state via its western iterations in the UK and the US, and its neocolonial exportation to the developing world.

Primary reading

Key text:

Wendy Brown, 'Undoing Democracy: Neoliberalism's Remaking of State and Subject', in *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution* (New York: Zone Books, 2015), 17-46.

Please also look at:

Wendy Brown, 'Walled Sovereignty, Walled Democracy', in *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (New York: Zone Books, 2014), 7-42.

Stuart Hall, 'The Neoliberal Revolution', *Cultural Studies*, 25. 6 (2011), 705-728.

Naomi Klein, 'Blank is Beautiful: Three Decades of Erasing and Remaking the World', in *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (2007; London: Penguin, 2008), 3-21.

Quinn Slobodian, 'Introduction: Thinking in World Orders', *Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 1-26.

Further reading

Jane Elliott and Gillian Harkins, 'Genres of Neoliberalism', special issue of *Social Text*, 31.2 (2013).

David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Naomi Klein, *Fences and Windows: Dispatches from the Front Lines of the Globalization Debate* (London: Flamingo, 2001).

Week 10: Globalization and the digital

Computational practices and digital culture are central to contemporary finance capitalism and global communication systems. This session explores the internet as a potential platform for political activism and civic engagement, given the fact that it is also a key site for financial transactions, marketing and data harvesting – activities that are pivotal to what many argue is the current form of predatory capitalism that threatens democracy. The first glimpses of cyberspace were often imagined as utopian, a site of liberation – how realistic were these early visions for our contemporary world?

Primary reading

Key text:

Jodi Dean, 'Technology: The Promises of Communicative Capitalism', in *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies: Communicative Capitalism and Left Politics* (Duke University Press, 2009), 19-48.

Please also look at:

Carole Cadwalladr, 'The Great British Brexit Robbery: How Our Democracy was Hijacked', *Guardian*, 7 May 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/may/07/the-great-british-brexite-robbery-hijacked-democracy>

Manuel Castells, 'Opening', *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age* (2012; Cambridge: Polity, 2015), 1-19.

Charles 'Chip' Linscott, 'All Lives (Don't) Matter: The Internet Meets Afro-Pessimism and Black Optimism', *Black Camera*, 8. 2 (2017), 104-119.

Further reading

Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, 2nd Edition (2000; Blackwell, 2010).

Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, *Control and Freedom: Power and Paranoia in the Age of Fiber Optics* (MIT Press, 2005).

Seb Franklin, *Control: Digitality as Cultural Logic* (MIT Press, 2015).

José Van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Lisa Nakamura and Peter A. Chow-White, eds, *Race After the Internet* (New York, Routledge, 2012).

Lisa Parks and Nicole Starosielski, *Signal Traffic: Critical Studies of Media Infrastructures* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2015).

Week 11: Globalization and the planet

This session reframes the debates about globalization we've been tracing through the prism of climate change. Scholars of the environmental humanities have identified a new geological period, the Anthropocene, in which human beings have themselves been identified as geological agents: how does the history of globalization fit within this periodization? We will explore the challenges to thinking on globalization posed by certain types of ecological and environmental awareness.

Primary reading

Key text:

Timothy Morton, 'The First Thread', *Dark Ecology: For a Logic of Future Coexistence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 3-59.

Please also look at:

Chakrabarty, 'The Climate of History: Four Theses', *Critical Inquiry* 35.2, (2009), 197-222.

Rob Nixon, 'Introduction', in *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 1-44.

Naomi Klein, 'Introduction: One Way or Another, Everything Changes', in *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate* (London: Allen Lane, 2014), 1-28.

Further reading

Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016).

Bruno Latour, *Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

Serpil Oppermann and Serenella Lovino, eds., *Environmental Humanities: Voices*

Second Half Sessions

Convenor: Dr Agnes Woolley (a.woolley@bbk.ac.uk)

Timetable: Monday 7.40-9pm, Autumn Term

These events take place immediately after core module 1 on various weeks during the autumn term (in the “second half” of the Birkbeck evening, i.e., 7.40-9.00pm). They are not intended to be purely content driven, but relate, in the main, to research and study skills, as well as providing opportunities for social interactions. Although the study skills sessions are primarily aimed at first year part time and full time students, second year part-timers are welcome to attend. The schedule for these sessions will be circulated in Autumn Term.

- Library Induction with Subject Librarian.
- Student presentations
- What is a Critical Bibliography?
- Essay writing skills: styles of cultural theory
- Essay writing skills: argument construction and referencing

Student-Selected Readings Exercise

The final session of the Autumn term will be a plenary session at which we will read texts suggested and selected by the student group. In the second-half session in Week 2 we will discuss this exercise in detail, which is ungraded but compulsory. As term progresses, it will be useful to record and keep notes of any reading you do beyond that listed in the course handbook.

You will be asked to post on Moodle the bibliographic information of your suggested reading, with information on how to access it, followed by a 400-500-word argument making the case for your reading. You may wish to consider why and how it complements reading we have already covered on Core Course 1 and the relevance of your suggested reading to your colleagues.

Please post your reading by the end of Week 8. In Week 9 a link to a poll will be posted to Moodle. Everyone should vote for one reading suggested by someone else and give a brief – up to 200-word – rationale for selecting the piece for which you’ve voted. In Week 10 the results will be published and we will read the top four selected pieces in class in Week 11.

MA Cultural and Critical Studies Reading Group

This Reading Group is student-led: it is organised and convened by one or more students. It is an opportunity for you to choose and discuss texts of your choice in an informal environment with your peers, as well as foster dialogue and peer-support outside the taught courses. The Group usually meets in the Autumn term on an evening collectively agreed. After the Autumn term, participants may decide to move to another evening, depending on when options are attended. If you would like to be involved in this group you may also contact the Course Director, who will put you in touch with the Group organiser(s). Students have also established other groups such as reading groups – *Das Kapital* and Hegel's *Phenomenology* are past examples. A Summer time dissertation discussion group has also been popular and useful in the past.

If you would like to convene the Reading Group, please contact the course director.

There are many other reading groups and seminars at Birkbeck and at the University of London, as well as in other institutions across the city (such as The School for Advanced Studies in Senate House, the ICA, Architectural Association, Tate Modern, etc). You are encouraged to participate. Look out for notices and posters or ask tutors if they know of any relevant events.

Spring Term: Option Modules

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

The timetable below lists spring options on offer in the 2019-20 academic year to the MA Cultural and Critical Studies programme. To make your module selection you need to be invited to enrol on the programme. All enrolled students will be sent instructions and a live link to the online module selection system to make their selection.

Please complete your selection as soon as possible, remembering that we offer places on a first-come, first-served basis, as our modules are capped and places are competitive. You will be asked to list a number of preferred options, in the event you are not allocated a place onto your first preference option.

The options listed here are regarded as of particular interest to students on the MA Cultural and Critical Studies programme. If you would like to consider an option in another department in the School of Arts not listed in this handbook, please contact your programme director to check that it will contribute to a coherent MA profile.

If you require help with your module choices you should contact your personal tutor. Please be aware that modules vary from year to year. If you are a part-time student, you should take into account when you make your module choice that it is unlikely that the same selection of option modules will be available in your second year.

Full module breakdowns for options and readings lists for the current academic year will be available on Moodle prior to the spring term. Some information provided below contains indicative reading. Once your module choices are confirmed, you will be able to access all updated materials on Moodle for your spring course. Please wait for updated reading lists at this time before purchasing texts in advance.

Please note, modules can be subject to change or withdrawal due to staff leave and module uptake. Module convenors are subject to change and those not confirmed for 2019-20 are listed as TBC below.

Module code	Module name	Day and time for 2019-20	Convenor
AHVM015S7	Contemporary American Cinema	Tuesday 18:00-21:00	Dr Mike Allen
ENHU053S7	Contemporary US Fiction	Wednesday 19:30-21:00	Dr Joe Brooker and Prof Roger Luckhurst
AREN237S7 AREN237S7	Culture and Human Rights	Tuesday 18:00-19:30	Dr Agnes Woolley
AREN197S7	Freud in the World: Psychoanalysis, Literary	Tuesday 18:00-21:00	Prof Jacqueline Rose

	Writing and the Legacies of History		
ENHU122S7	Language Matters	Thursday 19:30-21:00	Dr Peter Fifield
ENHU051S7	Post-Colonial Discourse and the Novel	Thursday 18:00-19.30	Dr Mpalive Msiska
AREN116S7	Twenty-First Century Feminist Fiction and the World in Crisis	Monday 19:30-21:00	TBC
ENHU068S7	Reading Time in the Twentieth Century	Thursday 18:00-19:30	Dr Sean O'Brien
ARMC172S7	Theoretical Perspectives on Media	Thursday 18:00-21:00	Prof Tim Markham and Dr Scott Rodgers
ENHU105S7	Reading Walter Benjamin's Arcades Project	Tuesday 18:00-19:30	Prof Esther Leslie

Dissertation Module - MA Cultural and Critical Studies: Advice and Procedures

Module Code: ENHU001D7

We aim to provide lots of support for this element of the degree, but here's what you need to know now.

- The dissertation constitutes 33% of your final mark.
- The dissertation should number 15 000 words. This excludes the bibliography, but includes footnotes or endnotes.

For PT2 and FT students, it must be submitted by **14:00 (2pm) Friday 11 September 2020**. This deadline is not negotiable. If you miss the deadline you will have to wait another twelve months before being awarded your degree, because the exam board meets only once a year.

Supervision Process

The dissertation proposal form is in the Appendices section of this booklet. You'll be asked to submit this online towards the end of the spring term. There is nothing official about the outline you provide us, and we don't expect a perfectly conceived project. However, it is on the basis of this outline that you will be assigned a supervisor, so it is important that you have a fairly clear sense of a topic by this point, so that you can begin meeting your supervisor from the beginning of the summer term. We will try to align your work with the most suitable person on the staff, where this is possible. You may wish to approach members of staff (including personal tutors and course tutors) for advice or discussion about the potential of possible projects well before this date; you need to be thinking about the dissertation relatively early.

The MA director will inform students of their supervisors by the beginning of the summer term. It's up to the student to contact tutors to arrange a first meeting. Students and supervisors should then arrange a further two supervisions (three in all), which **must be completed by the end of term (10 July 2020)**.

A dissertation is a work of independent research. The Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing runs a standardised arrangement for supervising MA students: students may have up to three hour-long meetings with their dissertation supervisor. In the course of these meetings supervisors may be asked to comment on plans or on drafts of part of the dissertation.

Your supervisor should help you to clarify your main thesis and aid you in shaping your thoughts into an appropriate scale. Your supervisor will also suggest further reading or lines of library research, advise you on methods of research, and comment on your dissertation plan. **The three supervisory meetings must take place before the end of the summer term (10 July)**. It is advisable to at least pencil in the future meeting

dates at your first meeting. You need to use these meetings wisely, and should be thinking about the last meeting as a point at which you are discussing a draft chapter or some form of written work.

Supervisory sessions are for discussion of intellectual ideas and suggestions for further research. In the course of these meetings supervisors may be asked to comment on your plans for either your research or your writing. Since the supervisor will also be one of the examiners for the dissertation he or she should not be asked to read the final draft of the dissertation.

Dissertation supervisors will read up to 3,000 words of the dissertation submitted by 03 July 2020.

Typing

The dissertation should be typed or word-processed, double-spaced on A4 paper, leaving generous margins all round.

Format

Pagination

All pages, except the title page, should be numbered.

Title Page

You should give the title for your dissertation on a separate page. The following is recommended as a format: Title in the middle of the page; then, at the bottom of the page 'Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the MA in Cultural and Critical Studies, Birkbeck College, University of London', followed by the month and year of submission.

Abstract

You should preface your dissertation with a 300-word abstract, which describes succinctly the scope and argument of the dissertation.

Bibliography

All dissertations should include a full bibliography listing all the primary and secondary sources you have cited.

Word Limit

The word limit is 15 000 words, excluding titles, diagrams and tables and bibliography.

Footnotes are included in the word limit.

Referencing

In your essays and your dissertation you must use a proper system of referencing. The Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing has adopted the MHRA style in all its programmes. Full details are given in the *MHRA Style Guide: A Handbook for Authors, Editors, and Writers of Theses* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association), which can be consulted in libraries, or bought in reference sections of good bookshops. It can also be downloaded from

Assessment Criteria for the Dissertation

- The dissertation should meet the required length: 15 000 words maximum.
- It should be written in good English, and it should be logically structured and divided into sections or chapters.
- It should be presented in a scholarly manner, with full references.
- It should critically address a problem that is clearly explained and draw a conclusion about it.
- Every part of the dissertation should be directed towards exploring that problem and should move the discussion forward.
- It should make a contribution to knowledge or understanding, in the sense that it discusses texts that have not been addressed from the perspective before, or that it presents new data, or offers a new analysis of existing data, or a new critique or synthesis of existing literature or debates.

Bibliography

There are many books and online resources that advise on managing dissertations and longer essays. Here is a list of a few that may be helpful to students:

Bell, J., *Doing Your Research Project* (Open University Press, 1993)

Bosworth, David P., *Citing Your References: A Guide for Authors of Journal Articles and Students Writing Theses or Dissertations* (Thirsk: Underhill for the Learning Resources Development Group, 1992)

Brown, Haines, *Guide to the Internet for Historians*, online at URL:

<http://library.ccsu.ctstateu.edu/~history/guides/guide3.html>

Cryer, Pat, *The Research Student's Guide to Success* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1996)

Denscombe, M., *The Good Research Guide* (Open University Press, 1998)

Foddy, William, *Constructing Questions for Interviews and Questionnaires: Theory and Practice in Social Research* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993)

Franfort-Nachmias, Chava, and David Nachmias, *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, 4th edn (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992)

Gilbert, N., *Researching Social Life* (Sage, 1992)

Gracy II, David B., *An Introduction to Archives and Manuscripts* (New York: Special Libraries Association, 1981)

Jarauch, Konrad H., and Kenneth A. Hardy, *Quantitative Methods for Historians: A Guide to Research, Data, and Statistics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991)

Lang, Gerhard, and George D. Heiss, *A Practical Guide to Research Methods*, 5th edn (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994)

Miller, R. H., *Handbook of Literary Research*, 2nd edn (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1995)

Sproull, Natalie L., *Handbook of Research Methods: A Guide for Practitioners and Students in the Social Sciences*, 2nd edn (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1995)

- Stempel III, Guido H., and Bruce H. Westley, eds, *Research Methods in Mass Communication* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1981)
- Watson, George, *Writing a Thesis: A Guide to Long Essays and Dissertations* (London: Longman, 1987)
- Williams, Frederick, Ronald E. Rice, and Everett M. Rogers, *Research Methods and the New Media* (New York: Free Press, 1988).

Dissertation Workshops and Project Presentations (Summer Term)

In the Summer term full-time and second year part-time students are invited to a series of dissertation preparation workshops as part of a summer programme shared with the MA Modern and Contemporary Literature and MA Contemporary Literature and Culture. These are followed by 'project presentations', which is a 'mini conference' where first and second year part-time students and full-time students are invited to give a 10-15 minute presentation on a topic of their choice (second years and full-timers are strongly recommended to present on their dissertation topic). The presentations are attended by a mixture of students and staff.

Dissertation workshops:

Wednesdays in the summer term, 6-7.30pm, starting on 29 April.

Week 1: All MA students meet together for an introductory session to the summer term

Week 2: Dissertation Workshop

Week 3: Dissertation Workshop

Week 4: Dissertation Workshop

Week 10: Project Presentations by MA students

Week 11: Project Presentations by MA students

Extra Lecture/Seminars, Weeks 1, 7, 8, and 9 – all students welcome

There is a window of opportunity for a small cluster of free-form classes in the summer term. These are optional classes, but they are a chance for students to come to an agreement about an extra area of study they want to pursue through a series of staff-led lectures/seminars. MA convenors for the MA Cultural Critical, Modern and Contemporary MAs will gather suggestions from students in Week 1 of summer term (01 May), then set a small amount of reading for the lectures in week 7, 8, 9. Staff leading the seminars will depend on the topics chosen!

For PT1 students, we aim to provide Core 2 reading lists as early as possible in the term to enable PT1 students to get on with reading ahead for the autumn term.

Please also look out for notices advertising the **Graduate Lecture Series**. These lectures are held on Thursdays 7.30-9pm. Speakers of international renown are invited to the college to give a lecture or to participate in panel discussions. The various MA programmes book two or three speakers pertinent to their area concerns, but speakers are asked to address a wider audience drawn from all the MA programmes in the school. It is stressed that you are heartily invited to all sessions, where sometimes you may also enjoy a glass or two of wine. It should also be noted that countless activities occur every day in the School, the College and in the surrounding institutions and Colleges, with direct relevance to your course and studies. You will be alerted to some

of these but should also sign yourself up to mailing lists and keep an eye out for posters. It would be helpful if students sign up to an email list and circulate details of relevant and interesting events in London throughout the year. Please filter for School of Arts events on the calendar here: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/events-calendar/>.

Assessment Information

Programme Assessment

The dissertation counts for: 33%

The Average Mark of the student's four essays counts for: 67%

[All students submit four essays: two core course essays and two option essays].

For a Distinction to be awarded, the dissertation must usually be at Distinction level (70 or above) and the numerical average of the four essays must be at Distinction level.

For a Merit to be awarded, the numerical average of the dissertation and the four essays must usually be at Merit level (60-69).

For a Pass to be awarded, the numerical average of the dissertation and the four essays must usually be at Pass level (50-59).

Students are required to gain a Pass mark on all Core course assessment.

Students are entitled to make one attempt, per piece of coursework, to make good failed essays. Resubmission must take place by the next coursework deadline following the return of the failed piece of coursework to the student (e.g. Autumn term essays submitted in January must be resubmitted by the April deadline or on a date agreed with the programme director). Usually standard coursework deadline dates each year are:

First Monday of Spring term
First Monday of Summer term
Second Friday of September

Progression on the Programme is dependent upon making good all Fail marks. Full-time students should note that, where they obtain Fail marks, the MA cannot be completed in one year.

Resubmitted work will normally consist of a second attempt at the same topic.

Students are entitled to resubmit a failed MA dissertation on one occasion only. An extension of up to one year may be granted for resubmission. Students must pass the dissertation in order to pass the degree programme.

Students who fail two pieces of coursework must suspend their studies until they have made good at least one of the failed essays.

The essays and dissertations are double-marked, and overseen by an external examiner.

Please note that all marks remain provisional until ratified by the External Examiner at the Exam Board in November of the year of finalising.

Grade-Related Criteria

These are the criteria assessors and the exam board apply when marking your essays and dissertations.

To be awarded a PASS at MA level the essay or dissertation should normally:

- Present a reasonably clear argument with some level of detail;
- Show a fair ability to marshal evidence, even if this is not quite sustained throughout the essay;
- Display a reasonably thorough knowledge of the relevant primary sources and texts;
- Demonstrate a fair grasp of a reasonable range of secondary literature relevant to the essay topic;
- To some extent situate the topic in hand within a broader historical and/or intellectual context;
- Use appropriate scholarly conventions relating to presentation;
- Be adequately documented, with footnotes or endnotes, and a Bibliography that reveals engagement with relevant primary and secondary texts.

To be awarded a MERIT at MA level the essay or dissertation should normally:

- Present a clear and detailed argument;
- Marshal a large body of evidence confidently and clearly throughout the essay;
- Display a thorough knowledge of the relevant primary sources and texts;
- Demonstrate a good grasp of a range of secondary literature relevant to the essay topic, including recent work in the field, and be able to engage with as well as rehearse current or recent debates on the topic in hand;
- Effectively situate the essay topic within a broader historical and/or intellectual context;
- Be very well written throughout;
- Be presented in a proper scholarly fashion throughout;
- Be well documented, with footnotes or endnotes, and a full Bibliography that reveals engagement with relevant and recent primary and secondary texts.

To be awarded a DISTINCTION at MA level the essay or dissertation should normally:

- Fulfil all the criteria of a MERIT essay and, additionally:
- Show a level of intellectual ambition beyond what is required for a MERIT mark;
- Display some evidence of originality in the selection of and/or interpretation of primary sources;
- Have a wide range of reference, beyond what is required for a MERIT mark.

Assessment

All essays are double marked, that is, they are marked by two members of staff. Essays are returned to students with a set of comments and a mark. This mark has been agreed by two internal markers. Marks remain unconfirmed until the exam board, which takes place in November. A selection of students' work is seen by our external examiners, who are the final adjudicators of assessed work. Once marks have been agreed by the exam board they cannot be altered. The exam board will take into account any mitigating circumstances that have been accepted, confidentially, by the Sub-Board, and makes decisions about penalties for late or missing work.

Marking Scale

70-100	Pass with distinction
60-69	Pass with merit
50-59	Pass

Marks below 50 constitute a 'fail'.

Essay Guidelines and Advice

Essays

Essays should be 5 000 words long. Please note that excessively over- or under-length essays will be penalised. Also, please be aware of the university regulations against plagiarism and duplication of your own work (i.e. there should be no overlap between this essay and material presented for assessment elsewhere in this course or in another module). Please ensure that your essay follows the style of referencing outlined in the MHRA stylebook. This is available on the web at:

<http://mhra.org.uk/publications/books/styleguide/styleguideV1.pdf>.

Dissertations

It is particularly important to submit dissertations on the deadline date. This deadline is not negotiable. If missed, the candidate will not be examined in the same year and will 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. Students should submit their dissertation electronically via Turnitin.

General

Students sometimes ask if they may write on an author who does not write in English. The bibliographies of a number of our modules include works in translation, especially contextual and theoretical works, and it is fine to discuss these in essays and the dissertation. However, the primary source material of assessed work should normally have been written in English. If you have a strong reason for wanting to write on an author who does not write in English, you should discuss this with the course convenor. Factors relevant to the choice of primary material for essays and the dissertation include whether you will be able to obtain the relevant secondary materials in the libraries open to you, and whether the module convenor is able to evaluate the work properly. Material by foreign language authors must be available in translation.

It may be that your course tutor issues a list of questions, one of which you must answer in your essay. In other cases, your tutor may encourage you to devise your own question. **In any case, your essay must be relevant to the course you have taken, in terms of both subject-matter and approach.** If you are in doubt as to whether what you want to write is relevant, you should discuss it with your course tutor. It is a good idea to take notes on this discussion, write a brief note recording it and share it with your tutor, so that you both have a clear, written idea of what your intentions are regarding your essay.

The criteria we normally use for making judgements about the range of assessed work, and their relation to the categories of Pass, Merit and Distinction, are set out formally in the Grade Criteria. It acts as a summation of our expectations, and should not be regarded as a check list but as useful guidance.

Coursework Submission, Return of Coursework, Late Submissions

Submission of coursework

Please note: If you are taking options from other Departments/Schools different procedures may apply. Please check with the relevant Department/School before submitting your essay.

All work should be submitted electronically via Turnitin Assignment on Moodle.

All work should normally be computer-generated (using a format compatible with Microsoft Word) unless you are told explicitly that an assignment may be hand-written. All work should be submitted double-spaced. Please note that the word count should include footnotes but excludes the bibliography.

Put your name and/or student ID number and the title of the module at the top of the essay, and include the title of the essay or the question as set out on the list of essay topics. Word count should be indicated at the end of the essay.

Please note that electronic submission is normally required by **14:00 (2pm)** on the day of the deadline.

We require electronic submission of your work for the following reasons:

- Some work will be marked online via Turnitin;
- Electronic submission is essential for purposes of moderation (second marking and External Examiner scrutiny);
- All work submitted online is automatically screened for plagiarism;
- We are required to retain a copy of all student work for up to five years after graduation.

For further information and instructions on how to submit essays using Moodle, please see Appendix A or visit the ITS Help Desk in Malet Street building.

Return of Coursework

Coursework will *usually* be marked and returned electronically within 4 weeks from the stated submission date or the date of handing in. 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 week period.

Please do not phone or email to ask whether your essay has been marked unless the marking period has elapsed.

Late Submission of Coursework

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 stipulated deadline, you should complete a Mitigating Circumstances form, which you can download [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 (such as a medical certificate). It is advisable to discuss the situation with your personal tutor before submitting the form.

Mitigating Circumstances forms should be emailed to the course administrator or handed in to the Department office within 14 days either side of the deadline that is going to be missed.

When you receive a late submitted piece of assessed work back from the markers, you will find that you have been awarded two grades: a penalty mark of 50% LP (late pass) 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. When the Mitigating Circumstances Sub-Board has met and considered your form, you will be told which of these marks will stand. If your claim has been accepted, the essay will receive the grade it has been deemed worth. If your claim is rejected, you will receive the LP mark.

Please note that Mitigating Circumstances Sub-Board will normally meet two weeks before the final exam board and claims will not be processed until then. Please see the Birkbeck College website for further details on [Mitigating Circumstances](#).

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.

College Assessment Policy

It may also be useful to familiarise yourself with the College online assessment pages and awarding regulations. Please see the following links for further information:

[Registry Policies](#)

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?

The College operates a 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.

Please refer to the Birkbeck website for updated information on assessment offences here: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/exams/assessment-offences>

Please access the assessment offences policy here: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies/documents/assessment-offences-policy.pdf>

Collusion

Like plagiarism, 'collusion' is an assessment offence. Any piece of writing you submit must be your own work. In the humanities, the way you structure your argument and express yourself is an inherent part of producing work of the required standard, and you will be judged on that, so it is not acceptable to get an inappropriate level of help in this area.

You may ask friends, family or fellow students to proof-read your work and offer advice on punctuation, grammar, and presentational issues, but it is not acceptable for someone else to come up with your arguments for you, or to re-write a draft you have produced.

If your first language is not English, you may find your written work a challenge initially, and it is acceptable to ask someone to look over your work and give you advice on punctuation, grammar and phrasing. However, that advice must be minimal and the argument and structure of any assessment must be your own work, and written in your own words.

It is unacceptable to pay someone to write (or re-write) your essays for you and if you are discovered to have done so, you risk expulsion from the programme. The College and the School of Arts have a range of services in place to help you improve your academic writing, so if you are concerned at all and would like some additional support, you should contact your personal tutor or the Programme Director.

Please refer to the website for further details here: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/exams/assessment-offences>

Resources

Birkbeck Computer Services

There are two or three large rooms in the main building and one in the basement of Senate House that make computer terminals available to Birkbeck students. This gives you free access to word-processing should you require it, as well as an e-mail account and entry to the internet. There are many, constantly growing resources available on the Internet, and it is becoming an increasingly vital element of academic research. Please see details on the website here: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/its/timetables/>.

The College constantly runs a rotating series of courses introducing students to word processing packages, negotiating the Internet, and other skills: check the notice board outside E101 (meaning the first floor of the Extension block of the main building), and sign up early: these courses are very popular.

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 or locate by another method – see below. 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.

There are many ways of accessing reading material pertinent to the course. Google Books provides sometimes very lengthy extracts that are sufficient for you to do preliminary reading. It is always worth googling for many texts are at least partially online in various contexts.

College Hardship / Book Buying Funds

It may be possible, if you are having financial difficulties, to apply to the College for assistance with fees and to receive small awards to help with the purchase of essential texts. For information and advice, contact the [Student Advice Service](#) and see the Birkbeck website here for further details:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/financial-support/hardship-fund>.

Libraries

Birkbeck College Library

[Birkbeck Library](#) is on the first floor of the main building in Malet Street. Please refer to the Birkbeck website for current [User Information](#), [Library Opening Hours](#), [Frequently Asked Questions](#), and to search the online catalogue.

Birkbeck Electronic Library

The Library subscribes to many electronic journals and databases. You can access these from anywhere within College using your Central Computing Services (CCS) username and password, and the majority of these resources can also be accessed from home or work.

The Library website is at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib>. As well as finding comprehensive information about the Library, its services and collections, you can also:

- Search the Library catalogue, renew your books and place reservations on items out on loan.
- Read articles in over 12,000 electronic journal titles and newspapers.
- Search databases to help you find out what has been written about the subject you are researching, including *Literature Online (LION)*, which includes the *MLA International Bibliography (MLA)* and the *Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature (ABELL)*, the *Arts & Humanities Citation Index*, *JSTOR*, *PCI* and *Project Muse*.
- Work through LIFE – an online tutorial to help you make the most of the Library.

Other libraries

Birkbeck students can also use a range of other libraries. Students have reference access to most University of London college libraries. In addition, the UK Libraries Plus Scheme allows students reference access to over 135 other higher education libraries and part-time students may also borrow from up to three member libraries. See the Library web site for more information.

Further information and help

Your **Subject Librarians** for MA Cultural and Critical studies programme can be emailed at elplibrarian@bbk.ac.uk. Please feel free to contact them with any Library enquiries.

Senate House Library

Situated next door to Birkbeck College, on the fourth floor of Senate House, this is a world-class research library, with extensive collections in twentieth-century British and American fiction and criticism. Staff are very helpful in negotiating this initially confusing library, and you should be able to find most of the materials you require. They have recently purchased a large number of videos which can be viewed in the building. Membership of this library is absolutely vital for your MA.

British Library

A copyright library, which receives all books published in Britain and has a very broad and deep collection of books published elsewhere too. It is only 15 minutes walk from Birkbeck and is an excellent resource for MA study. Books usually take between 50 minutes and 2 hours to arrive at your desk. The library has changed its policy regarding student admission several times in the past year. At the time of going to press, you should be able to join on showing your MA card, but it is worth checking the website for details before you visit for the first time. Queues to the admissions office tend to build up in the middle of the day – try first thing in the morning (from 9:30 am, or 10:00 am on Mondays). The library is open until 8:00 Monday-Thursday, and until 5 on Fridays and Saturdays.

University College Library

This is situated 5 minutes away from Birkbeck, on Gower Street. Students from Birkbeck are admitted to the library, and since it has extensive holdings in English literature, it is worth holding in reserve if texts are proving difficult to obtain. Make sure you have your Birkbeck college card and a photograph when you first visit.

M25 Consortium Libraries and SCONUL Research Extra

Birkbeck participates in an arrangement that allows academics and research students to use other research libraries in the country. It may be convenient for you to have access to the libraries of another university, especially if you do not live or work close to Birkbeck. Some university libraries also have extended hours, which can be useful if you need a quiet place to work later at night. (Imperial, for example, is open for 24 hours during its exam period, including to registered external users.) Opening hours change with some regularity, and libraries have different kinds of restrictions, so check websites for details. Begin with the M25 Consortium Libraries page at www.m25lib.ac.uk/, and www.sconul.ac.uk/use_lib/srx/.

Library Resources: Contact Details

University of London Library

Senate House
Malet Street
London WC1E 7HU
Telephone: 020 7862 8500
Fax: 020 7862 8480
Website: <http://www.uoll.ac.uk/>
Nearest Tube: Goodge Street or Russell Square

Birkbeck College Library

Malet Street
London WC1E 7HU
Telephone: 020 7631 6239
Website: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/>

Nearest Tube: Goodge Street or Russell Square

Little Magazines Library

Little Magazines Department

The Library

University College London

Gower Street

London WC1E 6BT

Telephone: 020 7380 7796 (direct line) or: 020 7387 7050 ext 7796

Fax: 020 7380 7727

Website: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/Library/special-coll/litmags.shtml>

Nearest Tube: Goodge Street

Courtauld Institute of Art Library

Somerset House

Strand

London WC2R 0RN

Telephone: 020 7873 2649

Fax: 020 7873 2410

Website: http://www.courtauld.ac.uk/new/research/index_lib.html

Nearest Tube: Charing Cross

School of Oriental and African Studies Library

Thornhaugh Street

Russell Square

London WC1H 0XG

Telephone: 020 7323 6109

Fax: 020 7636 2834

Website: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/Library/>

Nearest Tube: Goodge Street or Russell Square

School of Slavonic and East European Studies Library

Senate House

Malet Street

London WC1E 7HU

Telephone: 020 7862 8523

Fax: 020 7862 8644

Website: <http://www.ssees.ac.uk/library.htm>

Nearest Tube: Goodge Street or Russell Square

University of London Institute of Education Library

20 Bedford Way

London WC1H 0AI

Telephone: 0207 612 6000

Website: <http://www.ioe.ac.uk/infoserv/ishome.htm>

Email: lib.enquiries@ioe.ac.uk

Nearest Tube: Russell Square

University of London Institute of Historical Research Library

Senate House

Malet Street

London WC1E 7HU

Telephone: 020 7862 8740

Website: <http://ihr.sas.ac.uk/cwis/library.html>

Email: ihr@sas.ac.uk

Nearest Tube: Goodge Street or Russell Square

Warburg Institute Library

Woburn Square

London WC1H OAB

Telephone: 020 7862 8949

Fax: 020 7862 8939

Website: <http://www2.sas.ac.uk/warburg/mnemosyne/entrance.htm>

Nearest Tube: Russell Square

British Library: Humanities and Social Sciences

96 Euston Road

St Pancras

London WC1E 7HU

Telephone: 020 7412 7676 (reading room); 020 7412 7677 (membership enquiries)

Website: <http://www.bl.uk/>

Nearest Tube: Euston or Kings Cross

Daily and weekly newspapers and periodicals, including London newspapers and journals from 1801, English provincial, Welsh, Scottish and Irish newspapers from about 1700, and collections of Commonwealth and foreign newspapers.

British Library National Sound Archive

96 Euston Road

London NW1 2DB

Telephone: 020 7412 7440

Fax: 020 7412 7441

Website: <http://www.bl.uk/collections/sound-archive/nsa.html>

Nearest Tube: Euston or King's Cross

Music recordings of most periods, styles and countries; oral history, spoken literature and drama; wildlife sounds and sound effects. Duplicate recordings of BBC material. Free public listening service by appointment.

British Library Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections

96 Euston Road

London NW1 2DB

Telephone: 020 7412 7873
Fax: 020 7412 7641
Website: <http://www.bl.uk/collections/asiapacificafrika.html>
Nearest Tube: Euston or King's Cross

Public Record Office

Ruskin Avenue
Kew
Richmond
Surrey TW9 4DU
Telephone: 020 8392 5200
Fax: 020 8392 5286
Website: <http://www.pro.gov.uk/>
Nearest Tube: Kew

Guildhall Library

Aldermanbury
London, EC2P 2EJ
Telephone: 020 7332 1868 or 1870
Website: <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/guildhall-library/Pages/default.aspx>
Nearest Tube: St Paul's, Bank or Moorgate

History and topography of London. Publications of national and local historical societies, newspapers, complete files of House of Commons and Lords debates and journals, large collections of public and local acts and statutory instruments, House of Commons papers complete from 1830.

Barbican Library

Barbican Centre
London, EC2Y 8D5
Telephone: 020 7638 0569
Website: <https://www.barbican.org.uk/your-visit/general-info/library>
Nearest Tube: Barbican, Moorgate, St Paul's.

St Bride Printing Library

Bride Lane
Fleet Street
London, EC4Y 5EE
Telephone: 020 7353 4660
Website: <http://www.stbride.org/>
Nearest Tube: Blackfriars or St Paul's

Printing, publishing, graphic design and related subjects. Early technical manuals, manufacturers' prospectuses and type specimens. Trade serials and directories.

Battersea Reference Library

Altenburg Gardens

Lavender Hill

London SW11 1JQ

Telephone: 020 8871 7466

Fax: 020 7978 4376

Website: <https://www.better.org.uk/library/london/wandsworth/battersea-library>

Nearest Railway Station: Clapham Junction

Occult, architecture, William Blake, G A Henty, Edward Thomas. Closed some days - it's advisable to ring to check opening hours before visiting.

West Hill Reference Library

West Hill, (corner of Santos Road)

London SW18 1RZ

Telephone: 0208 871 6386

Fax: 020 7978 4376

Website: <https://librarytechnology.org/library/26913>

Nearest Tube: East Putney

Humanities, fine arts, special loan collections on history and travel. Closed some days – it's advisable to ring to check opening hours before visiting.

Marylebone Library

109-117 Marylebone Road

London NW1 5PS

Telephone: 020 7641 1037

Fax: 020 7641 1044

Website: <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/library-opening-hours-and-contact-details>

Nearest Tube: Baker Street or Marylebone

Medical collection, including dentistry and nursing. Also the Sherlock Holmes Collection which contains material relating to Conan Doyle and the history of detective fiction, and can be seen by appointment only.

Specialist Libraries Open to the Public:

Catholic Central Library

Lancing Street (off Eversholt Street)

London NW1 1ND

Telephone: 020 7388 4333

Fax: 020 7388 6675

Website: www.catholic-library.org.uk/

Nearest Tube: Euston

Commonwealth Knowledge Centre

Commonwealth Secretariat
Marlborough House
Pall Mall
London, SW1Y 5HX
Telephone: 020 7747 6164
Website: <http://thecommonwealth.org/knowledge-centre>
Nearest Tube: Green Park

The Commonwealth Literature Library has a unique collection of 11,000 books, written and translated into English on all aspects of Commonwealth and postcolonial literature. The Commonwealth Resource Centre provides multi-media resources for loan and information on all 54 member countries, peoples and organisations making up the contemporary Commonwealth community.

The Women's Library

Housed at the London School of Economics – please see their website for details of how to access the material.

Website: <http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/thewomenslibrary/>

Women's history, fiction, poetry, magazines; feminism and feminist criticism. The UK's best resource for women's history and literature.

Imperial War Museum (School of Printed Books)

Imperial War Museum
Lambeth Road
London SE1 6HZ
Telephone: 020 7416 5342
Fax: 020 7416 5374
Website: <http://london.iwm.org.uk/>
Nearest Tube: Lambeth North

History of the two world wars, and other wars and military undertakings involving Britain and the Commonwealth since 1914.

Poetry Library

Level 5
Royal Festival Hall
South Bank Centre
London SE1 8XX
Website: <http://www.poetrylibrary.org.uk/>
Nearest Tube: Waterloo or Embankment

The Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine Library

The Wellcome Building
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE

Telephone: 020 7611 8582

Fax: 020 7611 8369

Website: <http://library.wellcome.ac.uk/>

Nearest Tube: Euston or Euston Square

Websites giving UK libraries information

COPAC

<http://www.copac.ac.uk/copac/>

Access to the catalogues of all major UK university libraries. If you can't get the book you need in London, see if you can find it here and ask Birkbeck Library to arrange an inter-library loan.

M25 Consortium

<http://www.M25lib.ac.uk/M25/>

Links to over 100 libraries in the London area

UK Public Libraries

<http://dSPACE.dial.pipex.com/town/square/ac940/weblibs.html>

Libraries Information (via Birkbeck)

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/other.html>

Links to academic and other libraries.

Support for Students

Support for students with [Disabilities, Dyslexia](#) and [Mental Health Needs](#)

At Birkbeck there are students with a wide range of disabilities, specific learning difficulties, medical conditions and mental health conditions (hereinafter referred to as **disabled students**). Many of them have benefited from the advice and support provided by the College's Wellbeing Centre. The Wellbeing Centre is located in G26 on the Ground floor of the Malet Street building.

All enquiries should come to the Wellbeing Centre (+44 (0) 20 3907 0700) who will determine the appropriate referral to specialists in the [Disability and Dyslexia Service](#) and [Mental Health Service](#). They can provide advice and support on travel and parking, physical access, the Disabled Students' Allowance, specialist equipment, personal support, examination arrangements, etc.

On enrolment you need to complete a Study Support Plan (**SSP**), which will set out the reasonable adjustments that we will make with physical access, lectures, seminars, assessments and exams. After you complete this and provide disability evidence, we confirm the adjustments you require and then your department, examinations office, etc. will be informed that your SSP is available and adjustments can be made. You should contact the Wellbeing Service if any of your adjustments are not in place.

Access at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's main buildings have wheelchair access, accessible lifts and toilets, our reception desks and teaching venues have induction loops for people with hearing impairments, and we have large print and tactile signage. Accessible parking, lockers, specialist seating in lectures and seminars and portable induction loops can all be arranged by the Disability & Dyslexia Service.

The Disabled Students' Allowance

UK and EU (with migrant worker status) disabled students on undergraduate and postgraduate courses are eligible to apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance (**DSA**). The DSA provides specialist equipment including computers with assistive technology and training, personal help (e.g. study skills tutors, mentors and BSL interpreters) and additional travel costs for students who have to use taxis. It provides thousands of pounds worth of support and all the evidence shows that students who receive it are more likely to complete their courses successfully. The Wellbeing Centre can provide further information on the DSA and can assist you in applying to Student Finance England for this support. Students will receive their note-taking support from the University rather than the DSA.

Support in your Department

Your Department is responsible for making reasonable adjustments in learning and teaching and assessment, specialist seating, etc. Whilst we anticipate that this support will be provided by the Programme Director, tutors and Programme Administrator in the

Department, they will also have a Disability Lead. If you experience any difficulties or require additional support from the Department then they may also be able to assist you. Further details and contact information can be found [here](#).

Support in IT Services and Library Services

There is a comprehensive range of specialist equipment for students with disabilities in IT Services. This includes an Assistive Technology Room, which may be booked by disabled students. We have software packages for dyslexic students (e.g. ClaroRead and Mind view), screen reading and character enhancing software for students with visual impairments available in our computer laboratories, specialist scanning software, large monitors, ergonomic mice and keyboards, specialist orthopaedic chairs, etc. We have an Assistive Technology Officer, who can be contacted via IT Services.

The Library has an Assistive Technology Centre, where there is also a range of specialist equipment, including an electronic magnifier for visually impaired students, as well as specialist orthopaedic chairs and writing slopes. The Disability and Dyslexia Service Office refers all students with disabilities to the Library Access Support service, who provide a comprehensive range of services for students with disabilities and dyslexia.

Examinations and Assessments

Many disabled students can receive support in examinations, including additional time, use of a computer, etc. In exceptional circumstances, students may be offered an alternative form of assessment.

Specific Learning Difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia)

Mature students who experienced problems at school are often unaware that these problems may result from their being dyslexic. Whilst dyslexia cannot be cured, you can learn strategies to make studying significantly easier. If you think you may be dyslexic you can take an online screening test in the computer laboratories – the instructions for the screening test are available on the Disability Office website. If appropriate, you will be referred to an Educational Psychologist for a dyslexia assessment. Some students can receive assistance in meeting the cost of this assessment, either from their employer or from Birkbeck.

Further information

For further information please access the website [here](#) for updated contact details and information on Wellbeing drop-in sessions in the [Student Advice Centre](#).

Academic and Language Support Facilities for Postgraduate Students

Centre for Transformative Practice in Learning and Teaching (CTPLT)

The Centre for Transformative Practice in Learning and Teaching (located in the Main Building, Torrington Square) provides workshops and some individual tutorial assistance to PG students. Please click on this [link](#) and look under the 'Postgraduate Student Support' tab on the website for further information.

One-To-One Tutorials

The CTPLT offers a number of one-to-one tutorials available each week, including during term 3. These are meant to help students with a specific aspect of their writing. Tutorials can be booked by emailing: learningskills@bbk.ac.uk. Students are asked to bring a sample of their work with them to the appointment.

Workshops Covering a Range of Skills

There are CTPLT workshops specifically for PG students. These are offered periodically throughout the year, but more frequently in Autumn and Spring terms. There is an 'Academic Writing Day for PGs' in May, and a day in February on referencing.

Workshops can be viewed and booked on the [Academic Development Workshop Calendar](#). The Academic Development Workshop Calendar includes information on all workshops offered throughout Birkbeck.

Facilitated Writing Workshops

In July and August CTPLT will be hosting a series of facilitated writing workshops designed to help students engage with their dissertation writing process. These workshops are also booked through the [Academic Development Workshop Calendar](#).

Language and Grammar

The CTPLT offers workshops through the year on aspects of formal, academic expression. There are also weekly 'Drop In' Language and Grammar sessions. Information about topics, dates and venues can be found on the [Academic Development Workshop Calendar](#).

School of Arts Workshops

In the Autumn and Spring terms, [Dr Fleur Rothschild](#), Learning Development Tutor for the School of Arts, offers a series of workshops on:

- Study Skills
- Research Skills
- Essay Writing
- Language and Grammar

These workshops are open to all students in the School of Arts, including Postgraduate students, and there is always a contingent of PGs who attend each term. The schedules

are usually published in September and can then be accessed via the Birkbeck website [here](#) or in the [Academic Development Workshop Calendar](#).

Regrettably, Dr Rothschild is unable to offer one-to-one help to Postgraduate students who should, in the first instance, contact their Personal Tutor, or Dissertation Supervisor.

Online resources

Online resources can be found in students' Moodle list:

- Birkbeck Learning Skills, for example [What materials are available to help develop my academic English?](#)
- [School of Arts Study Skills](#)
Study Tools; Language and Grammar. This resource is a WIP which will be progressively developed through the summer and the coming academic year. It currently contains resources and slides from some of the Study Skills, and Language and Grammar workshops.

Get Ahead: Stay Ahead - Helping you get the best possible start to your course

At Birkbeck we want to make sure you get all the help you need to get your studies off to a great start and to provide you with support during your course. On the Get Ahead: Stay Ahead website you can access a range of online resources to help you:

- consider how you can achieve your goals
- find out what studying at Birkbeck is like
- improve your study skills and succeed on your course
- The online materials are interactive tutorials that are free to use and you can work through them at your own pace.

These interactive tutorials will help you consider how you can achieve your goals, find out what studying at Birkbeck is like and improve your academic skills: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/get-ahead-stay-ahead>.

For further information on Learning Development and Academic Skills support available within Birkbeck College, please see the website for details: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support>.

Student Support



As a Birkbeck student, you can get access to a range of support and study facilities. Please follow the links below to access current information on the following facilities:

- [Academic support](#)
- [Accommodation services](#)
- [Career services](#)
- [Computing and IT services](#)
- [Counselling service](#)
- [Disability and dyslexia support](#)
- [Financial support](#)
- [Graduate Research School](#)
- [Health services](#)
- [Learning Development Service](#)
- [Library services](#)
- [Lockers](#)
- [Moodle](#)
- [Nursery](#)
- [Orientation for new students](#)
- [Student Advice Centre](#)
- [Wellbeing Service](#)

If you want to talk to someone about any aspect of this provision, please contact the [Student Advice Service](#).

International Students

Birkbeck offers a range of support services for international students. Please access the website for details [here](#).

- [Guide for international students](#)
- [Submit your Visa and immigration enquiry](#)
- [Visa and registration information](#)

Appendix A: Getting Started with Moodle

What is Moodle?

Birkbeck uses 'Moodle' as its Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platform. Moodle is used to house course documentation (handbooks, module outlines, coursework, coversheets etc.) materials (readings, PowerPoint presentations, slide lists etc.) and for electronic submission and marking of coursework.

Access Moodle

You can access Moodle [here](#). To log in you need your ITS username and password, a computer with a connection to the internet and a web browser such as Internet Explorer or Firefox.

Login Details

If you are having login problems, but your password is working for other services, please change your password via the online [form](#) (allow one hour after completing this form, and then log in to Moodle again). If this hasn't resolved the problem please contact the [ITS Helpdesk](#) via email (its@bbk.ac.uk), telephone (020 7631 6543), or in person (Malet St building, next to the entrance to the Library).

Moodle Support for Students

Please access the [Moodle Support area for Birkbeck students](#) for information on [how to get started with Moodle](#) and updates on how to submit the all-important Turnitin assignment.

Appendix B: Common Awards Scheme Regulations and Policies

Common Awards Scheme

Please access the [Common Awards Scheme](#) regulations for taught and research programmes for the current academic year.

If you have any queries regarding the regulations please contact asq@bbk.ac.uk.

Policies

See the Birkbeck College website for access to current [policies](#) including: **Assessment Offences, Mitigating Circumstances** and **Break-in-Studies Policy**.

Appendix C: MA Cultural and Critical Studies Staff Contact List

Key Contacts		
Dr Agnes Woolley Programme Director	Room 111, 43 Gordon Sq	a.woolley@bbk.ac.uk 020 7631 6180
Administrative Team	Room G19/G20, 43 Gordon Sq	englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk
Teaching Staff on the MA Cultural and Critical Studies Programme		
Dr Stephen Clucas	Room 306, 43 Gordon Sq	s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk 020 3073 8421
Professor Martin Eve	Room 416, 43 Gordon Sq	martin.eve@bbk.ac.uk 020 3073 8420
Professor Esther Leslie	Room 206, 43 Gordon Sq	e.leslie@bbk.ac.uk 0203 073 8210
Dr Anna Hartnell	Room 208A, 43 Gordon Sq	a.hartnell@bbk.ac.uk 020 7631 6184

Above are the core teachers on the MA Cultural and Critical Studies programme. Teaching and dissertation supervisions are also provided by additional specialists in the Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing. Please access a complete list of academic staff in the Department [here](#).

- Remember to check office hours with individual staff members. We ask you visit offices only when you have made an appointment. Please ring or email in advance. Staff members are available for tutorials at other times by appointment.
- Staffing is subject to change and listing in this handbook is not a guarantee that a specific staff member will be with the Department in the 2019-20 academic year.
- There is a research leave policy in the College, which means that all members of academic staff are entitled to one term's research leave every three years. In addition, members of staff are regularly awarded externally funded research leave, by organisations such as the Leverhulme Trust and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Therefore, not all academic staff will be present at all times. On such occasions the Department will arrange replacement cover and advise the affected students

Appendix D: MA Dissertation Proposal Form

This form must be submitted via Turnitin Assignment by 14:00, Friday 06 March 2020.

<p>Name</p> <p>Student Number</p>

<p>Proposed Topic</p>

<p>Brief Outline / Abstract</p>
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Brief Indicative Reading List / Sources To Be Used