School of Arts
Department of English & Humanities

MA Medieval Literature & Culture

2016-2017
MA Medieval Literature & Culture Handbook
2016-2017

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Published September 2016

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

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<tr>
<th>Autumn Term</th>
<th>Spring Term</th>
<th>Summer Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 3 October 2016 to</td>
<td>Monday 9 January 2017 to</td>
<td>Monday 24 April 2017 to</td>
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<td>Friday 16 December 2016</td>
<td>Friday 24 March 2017</td>
<td>Friday 7 July 2017</td>
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- MA induction: Friday 7 October 6.00-9.00pm
- Library induction: Wednesday 18 October 7.40-9.00pm

Key personnel you need to know include:

Professor Alison Finlay, Course Director
Tel: 020 3073 8404
Email: a.finlay@bbk.ac.uk
Room 213, School of Arts, 43 Gordon Square.

Administration
Tel: 0203 073 8372
Email: englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk
Room G19, School of Arts, 43 Gordon Square.

Introduction

Welcome to the MA in Medieval Literature and Culture in the Department of English & Humanities. This programme offers the opportunity to make a special study of the medieval period, considering the richness and diversity of its literature, art and history. On this programme it is possible to study in either an interdisciplinary or in a more literary way.

The core course, Medieval Text and Intertext, focuses on the relationships between medieval literary text, looking at medieval literary theory. It offers students ways to consider a reading culture which is different from our own and specialist coaching in the resources which support study in medieval literature.

The Department of English 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.
MA Programme Director/ Personal Tutors
The MA Programme Director is available to discuss your progress through the degree and to answer any questions you may have about the course. In addition, each student will be assigned a Personal Tutor. The MA Programme Director for the current year is Professor Alison Finlay. Appointments with her, your Personal Tutor, and Optional Module convenors should be arranged on an individual basis, either during the tutor’s office hours or at any other mutually convenient time. Please get in touch with tutors by phone or by email.

The Department Office
The Department Office is in room G19, 43 Gordon Square, and is open from 10.00am to 6.00pm, from Monday to Friday. Outside of the office hours of 10.00am to 6.00pm please contact this office by phone or email to discuss your query or to book an appointment. Please contact englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk for assistance, or you may visit the My Birkbeck helpdesk.

Programme Structure

Part-time Study

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<th>Autumn</th>
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<tr>
<td>Year One</td>
<td>Core Module</td>
<td>Option Module 1</td>
<td>Approaching Research in Medieval Studies</td>
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<td>Year Two</td>
<td>Option Module 2</td>
<td>Option Module 3</td>
<td>Approaching Research in Medieval Studies</td>
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<td>Dissertation Research and Submission of Dissertation</td>
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Full-time Study

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<tr>
<td>Year One</td>
<td>Core Module</td>
<td>Option Module 2</td>
<td>Approaching Research in Medieval Studies</td>
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<td>Option Module 1</td>
<td>Option Module 3</td>
<td>Dissertation Research and Submission of Dissertation</td>
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Option modules run over one term and take up ten teaching weeks. Reading weeks are observed in most courses in week 6. As Medieval Literature and Culture is an
interdisciplinary course, drawing on modules from several departments, starting dates, times of classes and reading weeks can vary. You should always check the dates on which modules start with the lecturer. Similarly essay deadlines may vary from module to module and you must check with your tutor to make sure of these.

Students may choose to study Latin and palaeography, too, although these are not assessed elements of the course. Latin is offered at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. You would be expected to have done some Latin before doing palaeography. If you are interested in taking either of these options you should get in touch with the course director or administrator before the course begins.

**Attendance Requirements**

Taking a degree course at Birkbeck requires a high level of commitment, it is important that you attend lectures and classes consistently. **Birkbeck College enforces a 75% attendance policy. It is your responsibility to make sure you use your card on the e-card reader to register 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 do have to miss a class please notify the module tutor, Programme Director and administrator by email.
# Module Timetable

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<th>Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>Autumn Term</td>
<td>6.00-7.20</td>
<td>The Woman Question: Medieval to Renaissance</td>
<td>Text and Intertext (Core Module or option module for 2nd years)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Katherine Zieman and Sue Wiseman</td>
<td>Anthony Bale</td>
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<td>6.00-8.00</td>
<td>Magic, Science and Religion in the Renaissance</td>
<td>Stephen Clucas</td>
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<td>Medieval Manuscripts</td>
<td>Alessandro Silvestri</td>
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<td>Spring Term</td>
<td>6.00-7.20</td>
<td>Power and control in Spanish Golden Age</td>
<td>The Icelandic Saga</td>
<td>Renaissance Loves</td>
<td>Sue Wiseman</td>
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<td>painting</td>
<td>Alison Finlay</td>
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<td>Carmen Fracchia</td>
<td>Visualising the Renaissance Stage</td>
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<td>6.00-8.00</td>
<td>Gillian Wood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer Term</td>
<td>6.00-7.20</td>
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<td>Summer Core: Dissertation &amp; Research</td>
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<td>Skills (this is compulsory for both 1st and 2nd years)</td>
<td>Patients in Renaissance and Early Modern</td>
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As well as these options, which are the most applicable to this programme, it might be possible for you to take others from other programmes. You should contact the course director if you want to take a module from another programme.

Core Module: Medieval Text and Intertext
AREN19057
Core course for MA Medieval Literature and Culture

Autumn 2016: Tuesdays 6-7.20pm

Tutor: Professor Anthony Bale (a.bale@bbk.ac.uk)

General Outline
This course uses English literary case studies to consider the relationship between medieval texts and their sources, or intertexts. It will explore questions around genre, form and allusion to prise open the subject of medieval literary theory. What was an author in the Middle Ages? What is the relationship between translation and composition in this period? Why might writers choose to write in the vernacular, rather than a higher status and more universal language like Latin? How did medieval writers receive and engage with the work of others, perhaps from other cultures and languages? How did medieval writers understand and use the concept of genre? We will look at some of key narratives – both in their ‘original’ sources and the way they were handled and reshaped by medieval English writers – including biblical stories, Ovid, Boethius, Geoffrey of Monmouth, and Petrarch.

This module will explore these topics (and others) whilst studying a selection from the most sparkling and extraordinary English writing of the Middle Ages from lyric, life writing and romance, to dream vision, mysticism and social satire.

This module aims to:

- extend students’ knowledge of some of the main modes of medieval English literary writing.
- explore genre, form and the interdisciplinary relation between medieval texts.
- expose the sophistication of medieval literary theory through a number of key case studies.
• consider the internationality of medieval literary influence.
• recognize the regional diversity of English in the medieval period.
• consider how form, genre and other aspects of literary writing change over time in the Middle Ages.

At the end of this module students will be able to:

• demonstrate an awareness of the main resources for studying medieval forms of English.
• appreciate a range of Middle English texts in different genres.
• relate medieval writings to the culture within which they were produced and used.
• explore the relationship between text, image and performance in medieval culture.
• expose the sophistication of medieval textual productions.
• investigate the connections between the contents and format of medieval manuscripts.– consider the history of book production and consumption across the medieval period.– investigate the impact of printing at the end of the medieval period.

Assessment: 5000 word essay, due 16 January 2017 by 12.00pm.

Recommended prior reading:

Primary
Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, books 1-8

Boethius, *the Consolation of Philosophy*

Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*

Petrarch, *The Canzoniere*

Secondary
Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1995)


Other useful reading (available in the library – also see the note about reading at the back


Machan, Tim, *Textual Criticism and Middle English Texts* (Charlottesville VA: University of Virginia, 1994).


A Course of Independent Directed Reading
AREN112S7
Autumn, Spring or Summer Term

By arrangement with the Course Director, Professor Alison Finlay
In place of one of the timetabled Option modules, the Course of Directed Reading can be taken by students whose interests cannot be catered elsewhere and, subject to the Course Director’s approval, can be supported by a member of academic staff. In consultation with the Course Director, the student will put together a research topic and then have 3 meetings with a member of academic staff; after the first of these meetings, a compulsory indicative bibliography will be produced. Amongst other things, the member of academic staff will advise on appropriate libraries, bibliographies, online resources as well as helping frame and refine the topic of enquiry. The subject of study could involve work in specialised languages such as Old English, Old Norse, Middle English, Latin and medieval Anglo-French, or specialised skills, such as palaeography or book history, or a clearly defined topic not covered by other modules available.

Learning Objectives and Aims
The course will enable students to:
• Develop an expertise in a specific and well-defined subject area through primary materials.
• Develop information-gathering, bibliographic, archival and writing skills.
• Interpret, analyse and interrogate a specific set of sources. If appropriate, this will be done in the original language or in the original media (e.g. manuscript)
• Develop the relevant skills with which to interrogate successfully these sources
• Demonstrate an awareness of the secondary scholarly bibliography around a given subject in specific terms
• Use libraries and relevant archives or institutions to develop an in-depth bibliography and critical perspective
• Work closely with a member of academic staff, using their advice to guide their research and writing
• Develop expertise in a specific subject-area and begin research-led scholarly activities

Assessment

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Indicative Bibliography</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessed Essay</td>
<td>5000 Words</td>
<td>90%</td>
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The deadline for this module will usually be the first day of the following term. However, if this is taken in the summer term it will be the same day as the deadline for the
dissertation (11 September 2017)
Programme-Specific Option Module Information

Please also look at the other options offered on the timetable above

Autumn term

The Woman Question: Medieval to Renaissance

AREN19457

Autumn 2016: Monday 6-7.20pm

Katherine Zieman and Sue Wiseman

Overview:

‘Women did not make the books and they did not put in them the things that we read there against women and their morals’ Christine de Pizan complained in 1399, taking aim at an established and admired tradition of antifeminist invective. She, of course, was to make books, as did other women who also found ways to engage with and use the literary traditions which discussed and defined their nature. This course offers the opportunity to read key texts in a sparkling and curious literary debate tradition, which had real force in the world and in women’s lived lives.

The course looks at the twists and turns in the complex querelle des femmes from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries, from Chaucer to Paradise Lost. It will chart a debate tradition which variously defamed and defended women, asking students to consider what was at stake in those debates. The course will explore the question of historical change over a wide time frame, tracking and charting the fortunes of particular stories (that of Dido, perhaps, or other famous women), the use of examples, debates on female rule. It will require students to consider the practical position of women across the medieval and renaissance period but also to engage with the medieval and renaissance literary theory and understandings of power and gender, within which the woman question was embedded. It will necessitate a consideration of the ethics of ‘writing woman’ in the medieval and renaissance past.

Why were people, and particularly male writers, so interested in the ‘woman question’? Was it just a literary game or did it have a real interest in women for themselves? What were the consequences and epiphenomena of this debate – for example, what impact did it make on questions about marriage, same sex love and other ethical quandaries? How did the terms of the debate change over time? These are some of the questions which students will encounter on a course which exposes the power that words have to govern people’s lives.

This module aims to:

- Bring to students’ attention the medieval and renaissance querelle des femmes
• Communicate the sophistication and intricacy of debates surrounding women in the medieval and renaissance past
• Demonstrate the relationship between ‘the woman question’ and early literary theory
• Pose questions about history and historical change in relation to women in medieval and renaissance writing
• Explore some of the following themes: reputation and infamy; virtue and sin; nature and biology; love, sex and marriage; intertextuality and literary tradition.

At the end of this module students will be able to:

• Demonstrate a knowledge of key texts and topics in the writing about women from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries.
• Recognize the central ideas within, and contexts for the ‘woman question’.
• Read and appreciate the form of medieval and Renaissance rhetorical writing
• Engage with the secondary criticism on the medieval and Renaissance woman question.

General reading list:


To begin with getting to grips with some Renaissance material you could look at Thomas Middleton et al., The Roaring Girl and Thomas Middleton, The Chaste Maid of Cheapside (any good modern edition of these plays will be acceptable.

In critical terms the best starting places will be Alastair Minnis’ guide to The Legend of Good Women and Linda Woodbridge, esp. pp. 1-9.

Select indicative bibliography:


Carruthers, Mary, The Wife of Bath and Painting of Lions, PMLA 94 (1979), 209-22 (much anthologised and available online here: http://sites.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/canttales/wbpro/carruth.htm

Castiglione, Baldassare, The Book of the Courtier (1561) trans. Sir Thomas Hoby (Dent/Everyman)
Desmond, Marilynn, *Reading Did: Gender, Textuality and the Medieval ‘Aenid’* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

Evans, Ruth and Lesley Johnson eds, *Feminist Readings in Middle English Literature: The Wife of Bath and All Her Sect* (New York: Routledge, 1994), contains a lot of good articles including a reprint of Carruthers (see above).


Magic, Science and Religion in the Renaissance

ENHU071S7

Autumn 2016: Tuesday 6.00-7.20

Tutor: Stephen Clucas

Overview:

This module investigates the relations between some of the major intellectual current in Early Modern Europe, the complex interplay between its various kinds of magic, science and religion. The course calls into question conventional forms of historiography that contrast a benighted illicit magic to either a pious religiosity or enlightened science and helps the student develop a familiarity with the theories and practices of those engaged in what has been called “the Other Side of the Scientific Revolution”. The course considers the boundaries of acceptable knowledge and the particular communicability of its forms in Mediaeval, Renaissance and Reformation Europe. Discussing the works of significant early modern thinkers (including Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa, Francis Bacon, Thomas Browne, Nicolaus Copernicus, John Dee, Giovanni Battista Della Porta, Marsilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, Theophrastus Paracelsus, and Johann Reuchlin), it will look at the interaction between magical, religious, and humanist discourse, the relations between ‘occult’ and ‘scientific’ forms of knowledge and natural and supernatural forms of experience and agency.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Locate ‘occult’ subjects as astrology, alchemy, cabala, natural and ritual magic, as well as works traditionally associated with the Scientific Revolution (such as Copernicus’s De revolutionibus) in the context of contemporary religious belief.

Main reading


Medieval Manuscripts

SSHC281S7

Autumn 2016: Wednesday 6.00-8.00

Tutor: Alessandro Silvestri

Overview:

Today, when books are taken for granted and, some people believe, about to become obsolete, it is illuminating to think back to a time when they were new and special. Medieval books were a different kind of object to today’s: they were rare, valuable and, perhaps most importantly, written by hand, and very few people could read them. How did people think about books, when they were accessible to so few? Who owned and used them, and how? What did the books look like, how were they made, by whom, and of what materials? What kind of texts did they contain, and where did these come from? How can we tell where and when manuscripts were made, and what does that tell us? What was the role of reading and writing in medieval society and culture more widely? In this module we’ll explore these and related questions, looking at the material objects themselves and examining their place in medieval culture, society, and even economy. We shall cover the whole of the middle ages, from c. 700 to c. 1500 AD, drawing most of our examples from England.

Recommended reading


Brown, Michelle P., *A Guide to Western Historical Scripts from Antiquity to 1600* (British Library, 1990 etc)


de Hamel, Christopher, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* (Phaidon, 1994 etc)


Roberts, Jane, *Guide to Scripts used in English Writings up to 1500* (British Library, 2005)

Spring term

The Icelandic Saga

AREN127S7

Spring term, Tuesdays 6-7.20 pm

Tutor: Alison Finlay

The course will explore the boundaries between history and fiction as represented in the thirteenth-century Icelandic Sagas of Kings and Sagas of Icelanders (or Family Sagas), which concern historical Icelanders of the 10th-11th centuries, and use a semi-historical narrative technique to relate Iceland and its people to the medieval world and the legendary past. We will start with a saga from Heimskringla, a history of the kings of Norway by the thirteenth-century Icelandic historian Snorri Sturluson, read a selection of the þættir (short stories) which are found interspersed in some of the kings’ saga texts and which often deal with encounters between fictional Icelanders and kings of Norway, and focus particularly on Egils saga, also often attributed to Snorri, one of the greatest of the sagas of Icelanders, in which the hero’s problematic relation with the kings of Norway is an important theme. Egill was a gifted poet, and we will also look at the relationship between kings and poets delineated in the sagas (including The Saga of Gunnlaug Serpent-Tongue and The Saga of Bjorn, the Champion of Hitardal). Texts will be read in English translation.

This module aims to:

- Introduce students to the major genres of Medieval Icelandic prose literature
- Promote knowledge of a range of Icelandic saga texts
- Promote understanding of the cultural context in which saga literature was produced

Main reading

Finlay, Alison and Anthony Faulkes, trans, Heimskringla I. From the Beginnings to Óláfr Tryggvason (Viking Society, 2011)

Kellogg, Robert, ed. The Sagas of the Icelanders (Penguin, 2005)

Whaley, Diana, ed. Sagas of Warrior Poets (Penguin, 2002)

Further indicative reading:


Hallberg, Peter, The Icelandic Saga, trans. Paul Schach (University of Nebraska Press, 1962)


Jesch, Judith, Women in the Viking Age

Jónas Kristjánsson, Eddas and Sagas: Iceland’s Medieval Literature, translated by Peter Foote (Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1988)

Meulengracht Sørensen, Preben, Sagas and Society (1993)


Vésteinn Ólason, Dialogues with the Viking Age: Narration and Representation in the Sagas of Icelanders (Heimskringla, 1998)

Visualising the Renaissance Stage

AREN185S7

Spring 2017: Tuesday 6.00-7.20

Tutor: Dr Gillian Woods

Overview:

This module gives students the opportunity to explore the innovations of the Renaissance stage from a visual perspective. It integrates theatre history (what did early modern stages look like? - what props and costumes were used to create spectacle? - what points of view did audiences have?) with extensive literary and theatrical analysis of diversity of plays. We will investigate the relationship between words and spectacle, and consider the role of vision alongside other senses engaged by performance. Asking how dramatists staged the visual arts, as well as the extent to which drama functions as visual art, the module will interrogate the mechanisms of representation itself.

Shakespeare will be studied amongst a range of canonical and less familiar dramatists to develop a nuanced understanding of one of the most exciting periods of the professional stage. Students will learn how to use a range of electronic and print-based research resources. They will also work with a variety of pictorial and written sources to give a fuller appreciation of attitudes to visual culture at a time when vision was freighted with moral danger.

Aims:

- To give students a knowledge of a variety of early modern discourses concerning visual culture.
- To enhance understanding of a variety of Renaissance plays.
- To equip students with a critical vocabulary for talking about the visual aspects of the Renaissance stage and its dramatic texts.
- To foster comparative skills that will enable students to analyse the relationship between literary and non-literary texts of different genres.
- To develop a range of research skills relevant to the study of early modern theatre and dramatic literature.

Module Outline:

(Please note, more detailed instructions about reading will be provided on a weekly basis. Students will be expected to have their own copies of plays, but the other primary readings listed below will be made available on Moodle.)

Week 1: The Stage and the Scandal of Spectacle

Selections from: Stephen Gosson, Playes Confuted
John Rainolds, Th’Overthrow of Stage-Playes
John Northbrooke, A Treatise wherein Dicing, Dauncing, Vaine Playes, or Enterluds [...] are reproved
George Hakewill, *The Vanitie of the Eye*

**Week 2: Special Effects and Ways of Seeing**
Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*
Selections from: William Bourne, *Inuentions or Deuises*

**Week 3: Sumptuary Display**
William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*

**Week 4: Painters and Painting**
John Lyly, *Campaspe*

**Week 5: Optics and Perspective**
William Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*

**Week 6: Reading Week**

**Week 7: Researching the Visual**
Research tasks involving the following sources and databases: *Henslowe’s Diary; Early English Books Online (EEBO); Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB); Short Title Catalogue; Illustrations of the English Stage, 1580-1642*, ed. R. A. Foakes.

**Week 8: Poisoned Vision**
John Webster, *The White Devil*
Thomas Adams, *The White Devil, Or The Hypocrite Vncased*

**Week 9: Plagued in Art**
John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*

**Week 10: Idolatry and Iconoclasm**
Thomas Middleton, *The Lady’s Tragedy* (also known as *The Second Maiden’s Tragedy*)
Thomas Tuke, *A Treatise Against Paint[i]ng and Tincturing of Men and Women*

**Week 11: Art and Revival**
William Shakespeare, *The Winter’s Tale*
Selections from: *The Homily Against Peril of Idolatry*
Representative Critical Reading List


Harris, Jonathan Gill and Natasha Korda, *Staged Properties in Early Modern Drama*


Renaissance Loves

AREN216S7

Spring 2017: Wednesday 6.00-7.20

Tutor: Sue Wiseman

Overview:

What were the meanings of ‘love’ in the Renaissance? Starting from this question you will explore the challenging and complex ways in which English men and women articulated the meanings of love – to explore desire, philosophy, adultery, sexuality, custom, crime and politics. Grounded in the writing of the English Renaissance from Philip Sidney to Lucy Hutchinson, the module will also enable students to engage with influential classical and European writing on love (in translation). Thus, students will be introduced to a core canon of texts on love from Petrarch on desire to Milton on divorce, but also to the other crucial texts of desire such labouring-status courtship narratives and texts of same sex desire in their diverse locations as political discourse, love poetry and court records.

Assessment is by 5,000 word essay. Essay questions will be given but students are encouraged to devise their own question in consultation with the convenor. Students may wish to pursue essay topics in primarily literary or social aspects of love and (for example they might want to research non-elite courtship or Donne’s representation of the body). Students should leave the module able to research and write on love and ready to begin their own research into this rich and central area of Renaissance culture.

Reading list


Cox, Virginia. Women’s Writing in Italy 1400-1650 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2008)


Franz, David, O. 1972. ‘“Leud Priapians” and Renaissance Pornography’, Studies in English Literature 1500-1900, 12/1: 157-172
Giffney, Noreen et al., eds., The Lesbian Premodern (New York/London: Palgrave, 2011)
Hardie, Philip ed., The Cambridge Companion to Ovid
Langley, Eric. Narcissism and Suicide in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries (Oxford: OUP, 2009)
Nardizzi, Vin et al eds., Queer Renaissance Historiography: Backward Gaze (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011)
Rose, Mary Beth. Heroism and Gender in Early Modern English Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992)
Rosenthal, Margaret F. The Honest Courtesan: Veronica Franco, Citizen and Writer in Sixteen
‘Venetian Women and their discontents’ in James Grantham Turner ed.,
Summer Core course for all students

Approaching Research into Medieval Literature and Culture

AREN049Z7

Tuesdays 6-7.20pm, weeks 1-5.

This course is a series of workshops and study-skills classes which all students should attend, including those who came to the course last year. There is no formal assessment, although students are asked to present different materials and contribute to class discussion.

Birkbeck Medieval Seminar

This is a free annual event which is specifically organized for Birkbeck students and is part of the core course provision. However, it is opened out to all in order to broaden the conversation. Usually there are four speakers and time for discussion on a dedicated theme.

Topic and details for 2017 to be confirmed. When they are available details will be posted on the college website at: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/eh/research/research_seminars/bms

Birkbeck Arts Week

This is a week of free talks and other events held on all sorts of different subjects, at the School of Arts. You often have to sign up in advance but there is always space. Make sure to check here for details of the programme when it’s available.

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/arts/about-us/events/arts-week

Summer term

Practitioners and Patients in Renaissance and Early Modern Europe

HICL101S7

Summer term: Wednesday 6.00-8.00pm

General Outline

This course uses English literary case studies to consider the relationship between medieval
texts and their sources, or intertexts. It will explore questions around genre, form and allusion to prise open the subject of medieval literary theory. What was an author in the Middle Ages? What is the relationship between translation and composition in this period? Why might writers choose to write in the vernacular, rather than a higher status and more universal language like Latin? How did medieval writers receive and engage with the work of others, perhaps from other cultures and languages? How did medieval writers understand and use the concept of genre? We will look at some of key narratives – both in their ‘original’ sources and the way they were handled and reshaped by medieval English writers – including biblical stories, Ovid, Boethius, Geoffrey of Monmouth, and Petrarch.

This module will explore these topics (and others) whilst studying a selection from the most sparkling and extraordinary English writing of the Middle Ages from lyric, life writing and romance, to dream vision, mysticism and social satire.

This module aims to:

- extend students’ knowledge of some of the main modes of medieval English literary writing.
- explore genre, form and the interdisciplinary relation between medieval texts.
- expose the sophistication of medieval literary theory through a number of key case studies.
- consider the internationality of medieval literary influence.
- recognize the regional diversity of English in the medieval period.
- consider how form, genre and other aspects of literary writing change over time in the Middle Ages.

At the end of this module students will be able to:

- demonstrate an awareness of the main resources for studying medieval forms of English.
- appreciate a range of Middle English texts in different genres.
- relate medieval writings to the culture within which they were produced and used.
- explore the relationship between text, image and performance in medieval culture.
- expose the sophistication of medieval textual productions.
- investigate the connections between the contents and format of medieval manuscripts.
- consider the history of book production and consumption across the medieval period.
- investigate the impact of printing at the end of the medieval period.
Assessment: 5000 word essay, due 16 January 2017 by 12.00pm.

Recommended prior reading:

Primary

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, books 1-8

Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*

Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*

Petrarch, *The Canzoniere*

Secondary

Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1995)


Other useful reading (available in the library – also see the note about reading at the back of this booklet)


Machan, Tim, *Textual Criticism and Middle English Texts* (Charlottesville VA: University of Virginia, 1994).


Presentations of Essays & Dissertations

Assessment is an opportunity for you to produce a portfolio of work of which you’re really proud. You can be inventive and creative as long as you make sure that your work also follows acceptable standards of scholarship. The main criteria for your work is that it should present critical analysis of some primary evidence which is central to the module being assessed or the dissertation topic on which you have chosen to work. It is difficult to be prescriptive about the style and scope of the essays and dissertations. Individual topics will often broadly determine the approach you are going to take, how much primary and how much secondary reading you need to attempt and so forth. You should usually try to discuss your topic in a one-to-one tutorial.

Some general observations are offered here about the expected standards. We are looking for a developed critical argument within your essays. This does not mean that you have to be strikingly original (though that is always welcome) but it does mean that the essay should show a thoughtful assimilation and assessment of the material you are dealing with – whether of the medieval evidence or of secondary material. Surveys of scholarship should be avoided. You should use critical scholarship in the service of your own argument, establishing the differences between what you and what others have said. This does not mean that you cannot accept the arguments of a writer you agree with, but you need either to show evidence of having come to that agreement after reading widely around the topic or that you are exceeding or building on that critical agreement.

You should keep in mind the following when preparing your essays and dissertation:

Depth and extent of reading
You should try to achieve a balance between these two. Some people prefer to concentrate on close and precise reading of one or two texts or to argue closely on a narrowly focused topic. There is nothing wrong with this, provided you remember also that it is essential to establish a context for the argument. Others like to build arguments based on a large number of wide-ranging texts or to detail a great mass of critical contributions. Again, this is fine, provided that the material presented is germane to the chosen focus of the essay. If you are going to concentrate on a small number of texts – e.g. Petrarch’s Sonnets – you should try to give some indication what position they occupy in the Petrarch canon or, if adopting a generic approach, how Petrarch’s sonnets compare with others of his period or later. In contrast, if you are discussing a very broad topic – e.g. medieval mysticism – discuss at length some representative examples and avoid making the discussion so diffuse that you cannot offer anything more than commonplaces.
Recent scholarship
You should give some indication that you are acquainted with recent scholarship and critical arguments (i.e. that published within the last decade). Clearly, you are not expected to read everything that may have been written on your topic, nor should you necessarily agree with the dominant directions taken by recent criticism, but you must reveal some knowledge of the most important directions. Part of the task in preparing your essays and especially the dissertation is discovering what has been written about your topic. It is important that you learn how to use libraries to discover what has been done and to learn how to sift large amounts of information to discover what is important for your discussion. The study skills sessions will help you with advice on this.

Documentation
References within your essay and the bibliography should be full, consistent and properly presented. You are expected to consult and follow the MHRA Style Book where a much fuller discussion of presentation is to be found. It can be downloaded from the MHRA website: http://www.mhra.org.uk/Publications/Books/StyleGuide/download.shtml.

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

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

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

Presentation
Essays and dissertations should be double spaced, although indented quotations should be single spaced. Include page numbers and a title at the top of the first page. The word count includes quotations, although not modern English translations of those quotations where they are needed. It is normal to translate foreign language and Old English material, but not Middle English. The word count does not include the bibliography or any footnotes which are used purely for referencing and which contain no discursive material. In general it is best
to use footnotes rather than endnotes and to reserve them for referencing only. If something is important to say, put it in the body of your essay; if not, leave it out. If you want to include illustrations that is fine but you must caption them, using MHRA referencing conventions as usual. They can go at the end of your essay or at the place in your essay where they are being discussed (although beware the formatting issues with attempting this).

Dissertations should be presented with a 300 word abstract at the front, which is excluded from your word count. You should include a title page, a contents page, a list of illustrations and/or abbreviations (if relevant), the text of the thesis and, then, the bibliography. You should otherwise present your dissertation as you would an essay. The thesis itself should be between 14,000 and 15,000 words long. Essays are usually 5,000 words long but you should check with the module tutor as sometimes requirements within modules differ. Excessive length or brevity (more than 10% over or under the word limit) will be penalized by 5 percentage marks.

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

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

Prose quotations up to about three lines and verse quotations up to one full line should be incorporated into the body of the text and indicated with ‘single quotation marks’. Longer quotations should be inset, in which case quotation marks are not needed.

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

**Citations**
If in doubt about how to cite a particular book or journal ask your option tutor or the course director. Enter citation details as you write your essay/dissertation, rather than trying to insert them after you have finished. Not only is this a tedious job, it makes the likelihood of error much greater. Keep proper notes so that you don’t have to hunt down places of publication or page numbers later.
References should be placed in notes, either at the foot of the page (footnotes) or pooled at the end of your essay/dissertation (endnotes). Notes are placed after punctuation, such as commas or full-stops, and quotation marks.

Thus: This was widely believed to have been ‘brought about by witchcraft’.¹

If you do not have facilities to place notes in superscript (as above), then place the number of the note in brackets.

Thus: This was widely believed to have been ‘brought about by witchcraft’. (1)

Notes should be numbered continuously throughout the dissertation. Follow the punctuation and formatting indicated in the guide below.

**For the first citation of any source, give the full reference; for the second and subsequent citations, use a shortened version.**

i. Books

In the first instance, references to books should be given as follows: Stephanie Trigg, *Congenial Souls: Reading Chaucer Medieval to Postmodern* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), p. 35.


ii. Articles in journals and periodicals


iii. Essays in edited volumes


iv. Unpublished dissertations


second and subsequent citations: Willis, ‘How to be a bore’, pp. 22-23.
'Op. cit.', 'Ibid.', and 'Id.'

As noted above, for second and subsequent citations you should use a shortened form of the full title or reference. This is preferable to the use of the abbreviation ‘op. cit.’ (opere citato, ‘in the work cited’), with the author’s name (as: Booth, op. cit. p. 33), since this forces the reader to search back through your notes to find the full citation.

Ibid. (ibidem, ‘the same’, or ‘in the same place’) may be used but only where the reference is to the exact same, single work referred to in the immediately preceding note. If all details are the same (even the page number), Ibid. may stand alone as a reference. If the pages referred to are different, then write: Ibid. p.13.

Id. or idem (idem, ‘the same [person]’) may be used when two works by the same person are cited one after another, as: Trigg, Congenial Souls; idem, ‘The Vulgar History of the Order of the Garter’, in Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England, ed. by Gordon McMullan and David Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 91-105 (p. 92).

You can also refer to MHRA style guide, which is available to download via the English and Humanities website, for details on how to cite other sources (eg newspapers, e-resources).

Bibliography

Your bibliography should be divided into two sections: one section for primary sources (original historical documentation, whether in printed or manuscript form) and the other for secondary sources (books, articles and papers written about the subject, usually at a later date). Within these headings, you may wish to separate printed primary sources from those in manuscript, or to separate primary sources by type (narrative sources, official pamphlets, private papers, and so on). Do not list books and articles separately. Do not divide up your books by the chapters of your dissertation; present them all together in a full alphabetised run.

You may find it helpful to look at the format adopted in the bibliography of a book dealing with the broad subject of your topic. You could also consult Judith Butcher, Copy-Editing: The Cambridge Handbook (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

When you write out your bibliography, your references should be in alphabetical order of the author’s surname, with works by the same author in chronological sequence of the publication date. As for reference notes, all titles of books and journals must either be underlined or (preferably) italicised, but article titles and book chapters are in inverted commas. You must provide the range of page numbers for journal articles and book chapters. A bibliography of all the texts cited so far would be:


Trigg, Stephanie, *Congenial Souls: Reading Chaucer Medieval to Postmodern* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001).


**Acknowledgements**

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

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

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

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 contact Dr Fleur Rothschild, the Learning Development Tutor for the School of Arts, or follow the link to Student Services
http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services
What happens if plagiarism or collusion is suspected

In October 2008, the College introduced a new three stage policy for dealing with assessment offences. The first stage allows for a very rapid and local determination for first or minor and uncontested offences. Stage two allows for a formal Department investigation, where a student wishes to contest the allegation or penalty, where there is an allegation of a repeat offence or for more serious cases. Stage three involves a centrally convened panel for third and serious offences, dealt with under the code of Student Discipline. You can read the college’s policy on assessment offences here:

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/administration/assessment/offences

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

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

General Guidelines

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support/plagiarism

Plagiarism

http://pps05.cryst.bbk.ac.uk/notice/bkplag.htm – Written for Birkbeck’s Registry.

You will also find an interactive online plagiarism quiz, which you can look at on Birkbeck Moodle.
Coursework Submission

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

For paper copy submissions please use the School of Arts coversheet for coursework submission and fill in all the relevant details, including your name and/or student number, the module title and code (all listed on your student profile), and the title of the assignment as set out on the list of essay topics. You should also sign the declaration that you are submitting your own, original own work (your “signature” may consist of your typed name or your student number).

All work should normally be computer-generated (using a format compatible with Microsoft Word, and not a PDF or similar). All work should be submitted double-spaced. Please note that the word count excludes: the bibliography, translations of foreign text quotations, footnotes which are used purely for referencing, the abstract and the title.

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

The Coursework Cover Sheet is available on this link http://www.bbk.ac.uk/arts/about-us/coversheets-for-coursework-submission (or via your department’s website, and paper copies are available from the entrance hall of 43 Gordon Square).

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

Return of Coursework

Coursework will normally be marked and returned electronically within 6-7 weeks from the stated submission date or the date of handing in, whichever is later. Larger modules and modules with numerous seminar groups, such as core modules, could take longer due to the number of students involved. There may also be a delay if the college is closed or if there are extended holidays during that 6-7 week period.
Essays are never sent back to students by post. If online submission/return has not been used, your lecturer will advise the method by which your work will be returned – normally via the student pigeonholes in the entrance hall of 43 Gordon Square. Your administrator will email you to let you know when coursework has been marked. **Please do not phone/e-mail to ask whether your essay has been marked unless the marking periods as above have elapsed.**

**College Assessment Policy**

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


**Late Submission of work for assessment**

College policy dictates how Schools will treat work that is due for assessment but is submitted after the published deadline. From 2008/9 any work that is submitted for formal assessment after the published deadline is given two marks: a penalty mark of 50% for postgraduate students, assuming it is of a pass standard, and the ‘real’ mark that would have been awarded if the work had not been late. Both marks are given to the student on a cover sheet. If the work is not of a pass standard a single mark is given.

If you submit late work that is to be considered for assessment then you should provide written documentation, medical or otherwise, to explain why the work was submitted late. You will need to complete a standard pro-forma and submit it, with documentary evidence as appropriate, to your Tutor or Programme Director. The case will then be considered by the appropriate sub-board or delegated panel.

**Mitigating circumstances policy and form:**


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

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

**Dissertations**

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

**Assessment**

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

**Marking Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70-100</td>
<td>Pass with distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>Pass with merit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Marks below 50 constitute a ‘fail’.

**Criteria for Award of Degree**

The Dissertation counts for 33%
The Core 16.75%
The Options 16.75%

**Grade-Related Criteria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| 80-100%     | • Possesses all the qualities of work of distinction level, but performed to an exceptional standard in most areas  
              • Demonstrates the potential for publication |
| 70-79%      | • Shows a sophisticated understanding of the topic, presenting a highly persuasive and original response  
              • Displays an outstandingly perceptive knowledge of the relevant primary evidence, making creative, incisive and/or subtle use of that evidence  
              • Presents an elegantly structured argument that displays sustained critical independence and cogent analysis  
              • Engages critically and imaginatively with secondary and, where relevant, theoretical literature, moving well beyond the material presented in classes and positioning its own argument within academic debates |
- Deploys a lively and sophisticated prose style with precision
- Demonstrates an advanced command of critical vocabulary and the rules of grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation
- Referencing (including quotations, footnotes and bibliography) immaculately presented according to the course handbook

| 60-69% Merit | Shows a sound understanding of the topic, presenting a perceptive and relevant response  
| | Displays detailed knowledge of the relevant primary evidence, making sustained, specific and often thoughtful use of that evidence  
| | Presents a lucid and well-structured argument that displays critical independence and effective analysis  
| | Engages critically with secondary and, where relevant, theoretical literature and/or material from classes, doing so in the service of an independent argument  
| | Deploys a lucid and fluent prose style  
| | Demonstrates an accurate command of critical vocabulary and the rules of grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation  
| | Referencing (including quotations, footnotes and bibliography) presented according to the course handbook |

| 50-59% Pass | Shows some understanding of the topic, and presents a largely relevant response  
| | Displays adequate knowledge of the relevant primary evidence under discussion, making appropriate use of that evidence  
| | Attempts a structured argument, but may be prone to the general, the arbitrary, the derivative, the incomplete and/or the descriptive  
| | Makes use of secondary and, where relevant, theoretical literature (whether critical, theoretical or historical) and material from lectures and seminars, but not always in the service of an independent argument  
| | Deploys a fairly fluent prose style  
| | Demonstrates an adequate command of critical vocabulary and the rules of grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation  
| | Referencing (including quotations, footnotes and bibliography) largely presented according to departmental criteria. |

| 0-49% Fail | Shows a limited or scant understanding of the topic and presents a less than competent response that lacks focus  
| | Displays a barely adequate or erroneous knowledge of the primary
### Notes:

- The above table is designed to give an indication of the qualities that are required in the different MA classifications, and to show the factors that are taken into account when marking MA work. Frequently, essays do not fall neatly into any one band. For example, an essay might have the ‘lucid and well-structured argument’ of a Merit while deploying the ‘fairly fluent prose style’ of a Pass. In such cases the marker has to weigh these qualities against each other and strike a balance in the final mark and classification.

These criteria will be applied when assessing the work of disabled students (including those with dyslexia), on the assumption that they receive prior learning support. Students who think they might qualify for support should refer to the Disability Statement in this handbook for further information.
Dissertation Advice

The dissertation constitutes 33% of your final mark. It should be between 14,000 and 15,000 words. This excludes abstract, titles, diagrams, bibliography and simple references (lengthy, discursive, foot or end notes should be included in the word-count). It must be prefaced by an appropriate title page and a 300 word abstract – a brief précis of your thesis.

A dissertation proposal form, to be submitted to Moodle by 11th March 2017, is at the end of this Handbook. If you have any difficulties about meeting the deadline contact the course director. Dissertation workshops will be held in weeks 1-5 in summer term. The final dissertation should be submitted on 11th September 2017.

Dissertation supervisors will read up to 3,000 words of the dissertation and this should be submitted before the end of the summer term. Only in highly exceptional cases will supervisors, in consultation with the MA Convenor, read more.
Disability & Dyslexia Service

At Birkbeck there are students with a wide range of disabilities, specific learning difficulties, medical conditions and mental health conditions. Many of them have benefited from the advice and support provided by the College’s Disability & Dyslexia Service.

The Disability & Dyslexia Service and Mental Health Service

The Disability & Dyslexia Service is located in the Wellbeing Centre G26, on the ground floor of the Malet Street building.

All enquiries should come to the Wellbeing Centre, who will determine the appropriate referral to specialist staff. They can provide advice and support on travel and parking, physical access, the Disabled Students’ Allowance, specialist equipment, personal support, examination arrangements, etc. If you have a disability or dyslexia, we recommend you call us on 0207 631 6316 to book an appointment.

The Disability & Dyslexia Service can help you to complete your Study Support Plan, confirming your support requirements with your School and relevant Departments at the College so they are informed of your needs.

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 and dyslexia 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. note takers, BSL interpreters, specialist tutors for students with dyslexia and mental health mentors 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 Disability
& Dyslexia Service can provide further information on the DSA and can assist you in applying to Student Finance England for this support.

**Support in your Department**

Your Department will receive a copy of your Study Support Plan from the Disability and Dyslexia Service. This will make specific recommendations about the support you should receive from the Department.

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. They may be contacted through the Programme Administrator.

**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 and dyslexia students can receive support in examination, including additional time, use of a computer, etc. They are often also eligible for extensions of up to two weeks on coursework, which should be requested in writing.

**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 this cost, either from their employer or from Birkbeck.

**Further information**

For further information or to make an appointment to see the Disability & Dyslexia Service, please call the Wellbeing Administrators on 020 7631 6316 or email disability@bbk.ac.uk.

**Resources**

**Birkbeck College Library**

Birkbeck Library is on the first floor of the main building in Malet Street. To join the Library, bring your College ID card to the Library issue desk. The opening times of the library are designed to meet the needs of part-time students in full-time work, and can be found on their website here [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/about/hours](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/about/hours).

You can borrow up to 15 items as a postgraduate student, and they can be renewed as long as no-one else has requested them. Most books can be borrowed for 3 weeks. Some books, videos and DVDs can be borrowed for 1 week.

Tours of the Library will be available for you to join at the start of the academic year - watch out for details of times. A more in-depth session with your Subject Librarian may also be arranged.

**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](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 http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/otherlibs for more information.

Further information and help
If a book you need is not available in the Library or you require any help using the resources or finding information, please ask at the enquiry desk (020 7631 6063). We also have two subject librarians at the library, Lindsay Tudor and Charlotte Hobson. Their email address is librarian@bbk.ac.uk.

University of London Library
Senate House,
Malet Street,
London WC1E 7HU
Situated next door to Birkbeck, on the fourth floor of Senate House, this is an excellent research library with a very good collection of up to date critical material and with essential journals for research on the Middle Ages. The Senate House also has extensive e-resources, chief amongst these are the International Medieval Bibliography and the Oxford English Dictionary. Membership of this library is vital for your MA.

British Library
96 Euston Road,
St. Pancras
London WC1E 7HU
A copyright library, it receives all new books published in Britain and orders patchily from Europe and the USA. It has an unrivalled collection of medieval manuscripts. It also has a map library and many other resources. Membership is free, and important. To obtain membership, the current regulations require that you give evidence of needing texts not available elsewhere. You will need a letter from us to view the special collections. Do ask us for one if you need it.
Warburg Institute Library
Woburn Square,
London WC1HOAB
An excellent and fascinating Medieval collection with much material not available elsewhere. Students from the Medieval Literature and Culture MA are admitted to the library. You may need to show a letter from the Graduate Administrator. Do ask if you want one.

Institute of Historical Research
Situated on the ground floor of the North Wing of Senate House, the IHR is an excellent resource for reference and many other materials for the study of medieval Europe and beyond. In order to join, take your Birkbeck College card to reception and join. “Connections”, the IHR booklet, will indicate the excellent range of seminars run through the year.

University College Library
University College is on Gower Street, close to Birkbeck. Students from Birkbeck are admitted to the library as reference users (no borrowing). It has good collections in the medieval area and some unexpected archives. Check with the library for any revised visiting arrangements. Make sure you have your Birkbeck College card and a photograph when you first visit the library.

Wellcome Institute Library
The Wellcome Building,
183 Euston Road,
London NW1 2BE
The Wellcome Institute has a huge collection of literature on medicine and the body. They also have a museum.

Courtauld Institute of Art Library
Somerset House,
The Strand,
London WC2R 0RN
The Courtauld Institute specialises in Art History. It has excellent literature collections and an image library.

Guildhall Library
Aldermanbury,
London, EC2Y 8DS
Material on London, print and manuscript, guilds etc.
# Academic Staff Contact Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>E-mail Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr Isabel Davis</td>
<td>020 3073 8414</td>
<td><a href="mailto:i.davis@bbk.ac.uk">i.davis@bbk.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Anthony Bale</td>
<td>020 7631 6167</td>
<td><a href="mailto:a.bale@bbk.ac.uk">a.bale@bbk.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Katherine Zieman</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:katherine.zieman@jesus.ox.ac.uk">katherine.zieman@jesus.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor John Henderson</td>
<td>020 7631 0686</td>
<td><a href="mailto:j.henderson@bbk.ac.uk">j.henderson@bbk.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Sue Wiseman</td>
<td>020 3073 8408</td>
<td><a href="mailto:s.wiseman@bbk.ac.uk">s.wiseman@bbk.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Laura Jacobus</td>
<td>020 7631 6121</td>
<td><a href="mailto:l.jacobus@bbk.ac.uk">l.jacobus@bbk.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Zoë Opacic</td>
<td>020 7631 6126</td>
<td><a href="mailto:z.opacic@bbk.ac.uk">z.opacic@bbk.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Rebecca Darley</td>
<td>020 7631 6489</td>
<td><a href="mailto:r.darley@bbk.ac.uk">r.darley@bbk.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Caroline Goodson</td>
<td>020 7631 6252</td>
<td><a href="mailto:c.goodson@bbk.ac.uk">c.goodson@bbk.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Gillian Woods</td>
<td>020 7631 6159</td>
<td><a href="mailto:g.woods@bbk.ac.uk">g.woods@bbk.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Stephen Clucas</td>
<td>020 3073 8421</td>
<td><a href="mailto:s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk">s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Katherine Harvey</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:k.harvey@bbk.ac.uk">k.harvey@bbk.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay Tudor and Charlotte Hobson</td>
<td>020 7631 6061</td>
<td><a href="mailto:librarian@bbk.ac.uk">librarian@bbk.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please check office hours with individual staff members. We ask you to visit offices only when you have made an appointment. Please ring or e-mail in advance. Staff members are available for tutorials at other times by appointment.
• Staffing is subject to change and listing in this booklet is not a guarantee that a specific staff member will be with the Department in the 2016-2017 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.
• Please see our website for queries regarding academic staff’s research interests and Departmental responsibilities.

Appendix A: Key Dates and Assessment Deadlines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Course Essay</th>
<th>Monday 16th January 2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autumn Term Module Essays</td>
<td>Monday 9th January 2017 for English essays or, if from another department, check with module tutor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation proposal form</td>
<td>Friday 10th March 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring term Module Essays</td>
<td>Monday 17th April 2017 for English essays or, if from another department, check with module tutor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertations</td>
<td>Monday 11th September 2017</td>
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Appendix B: Term Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Autumn Term</th>
<th>Spring Term</th>
<th>Summer Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 03 October</td>
<td>Monday 09 January to</td>
<td>Monday 24 April to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to Friday 16</td>
<td>Friday 24 March</td>
<td>Friday 07 July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03-Oct-16</td>
<td>09-Jan-17</td>
<td>24-Apr-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-Oct-16</td>
<td>16-Jan-17</td>
<td>01-May-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Week 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>17-Oct-16</td>
<td>23-Jan-17</td>
<td>08-May-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>24-Oct-16</td>
<td>30-Jan-17</td>
<td>15-May-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>31-Oct-16</td>
<td>06-Feb-17</td>
<td>22-May-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>07-Nov-16</td>
<td>13-Feb-17</td>
<td>29-May-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-Nov-16</td>
<td>20-Feb-17</td>
<td>05-Jun-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-Nov-16</td>
<td>27-Feb-17</td>
<td>12-Jun-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Week 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>28-Nov-16</td>
<td>06-Mar-17</td>
<td>19-Jun-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>05-Dec-16</td>
<td>13-Mar-17</td>
<td>26-Jun-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Week 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-Dec-16</td>
<td>20-Mar-17</td>
<td>03-Jul-17</td>
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Please see [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/about-us/term-dates](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/about-us/term-dates) for full term dates and holiday closure.

Students are reminded that it is inadvisable to take holidays during term time.
Appendix C: Getting Started with Moodle

Logging in and getting started
All modules within the School of Arts will be using Moodle for coursework submission.

- To log in to the VLE you will need your ITS username and password, a computer with a connection to the internet and a web browser such as Internet Explorer or Firefox.

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

- There is support information available in Moodle if you click on the Support menu and select ‘Moodle Support for Students’.

Contact ITS/Moodle Support
You can contact the ITS Helpdesk via email ([its@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:its@bbk.ac.uk)), telephone (020 7631 6543), or in person (Malet St building, next to the entrance to the Library). You can also email [moodle@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:moodle@bbk.ac.uk).
Appendix D: Programme Structures and Regulations

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

Some areas covered by CAS Regulations include:

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

Full regulations can be found here:

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies/documents/cas-16.7.pdf
Research Ethics

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

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

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

Further guidelines are available on the Birkbeck website at http://www.bbk.ac.uk/english/current-students/research-ethics.
Appendix: E: MA Medieval Literature & Culture
Dissertation Proposal Form

This form must be uploaded to Moodle by 5pm on Friday 10th March 2017

Name: ____________________________________

Telephone: ______________________________

E-mail: ________________________________

Proposed Topic: __________________________

Brief Outline/ Abstract

Continue over page (if necessary)