Please note that for all proposed new programmes sections A, B and C of the form must be completed. This form should be completed with reference to the attached Guidance Notes.

It is the responsibility of the author of the proposal to draft and lead on this matter with the support of the Head of Department (or Executive Dean for School held programmes).

The College’s ‘Programme Approval Guidance Notes’ and ‘Guide to Developing Programmes’ should also be consulted when completing this form. These can be found at: [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/reg/regs](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/reg/regs).

### SECTION A PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Award Title(s) (entry points)</th>
<th>Intermediate-Awards (See Guidance Note 2)</th>
<th>Department/School with primary responsibility for the Programme (Indicate if School held programme)</th>
<th>Other Department(s)/School(s) contributing to the Programme</th>
<th>Other Institution(s) contributing to the Programme (See Guidance Note 5)</th>
<th>Mode of Study (tick if offered) (See Guidance Note 6)</th>
<th>Programme/Modular Enrolment (tick as appropriate for CertHE programmes only)</th>
<th>Duration (years)</th>
<th>Length - standard/long (See Guidance Note 8)</th>
<th>Student Numbers in each year (Max/ min)</th>
<th>Programme Director</th>
<th>Proposed Start Date and location (See Guidance Note 11)</th>
<th>JACS Code/Cost Centre/Price Group (See Guidance Note 12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MA Contemporary Literature and Culture</td>
<td>The PG Cert. and PG. Dip. as intermediate exit awards.</td>
<td>Department of English and Humanities, School of Arts</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>FT X PT X DL NL</td>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Long</td>
<td>15/5</td>
<td>Anna Hartnell</td>
<td>September 2011</td>
<td>Q320, Q321, Q323</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Transfer Arrangements

For undergraduate programmes, the following wording should be inserted into this section, where relevant: "Credits obtained at another Higher Education institution or from another Birkbeck programme may be taken into account, subject to College approval." Where there are specific transfer proposals these should be detailed here.

Credits obtained on another Literature Masters programme at another Higher Education institution – or on another Birkbeck programme - may be taken into account, subject to College approval.
Main Aims and Distinctive Features (See Guidance Note 14)

- This new interdisciplinary programme offers the unique opportunity to engage in the specialized study of literature and culture after 2000. The programme's emphasis on the last decade will enable students to think beyond debates about postmodernism that have tended to dominate discussion of the contemporary at least since the 1960s, and to instead think about new cultural and aesthetic developments that have complicated and challenged that model. As such it will be the only programme of its kind on offer in London.

- This MA circulates around three key critical questions: how might we conceptualize and define the 'contemporary'? How might we characterize artistic and theoretical responses to the contemporary world? And how has contemporary literary art evolved – via its interactions with other aesthetic developments and new technologies – to best reflect on and express the present moment?

- This programme encourages students to engage both with imaginative texts that express and reflect on the contemporary, and with key theorists (for example Žižek (2002), Agamben (2009)) who have recently explored issues of contemporaneity and their significance for understanding art and wider cultural questions. The programme will therefore expose students to possible positions on the ‘contemporary’ which will enable them to explore and develop their own particular interests and frameworks for reading contemporary literature and culture. In this vein the contemporary will be treated as both a conceptual construct and as a periodizing term.

- Core course 1, ‘Reading the Contemporary’, will introduce students to a wide variety of contemporary literary and cultural works, encompassing the novel, memoir, genre fiction, poetry, film, graphic text, blogs and more. This range enables the exploration of cutting edge contemporary literature and visual culture, both as it is more traditionally conceived and as it has been transformed by new technologies, particularly the internet. This course will thus provide a forum for both conceptualizing the contemporary and for shaping debate about the ways in which artists, theorist and critics characterize the constantly shifting and ephemeral nature of the 'now'. As a way of opening up suggestive possibilities for students reflecting on these questions, the course will adopt a two-part structure, the first of which will explore ‘the aesthetics of disintegration’ and the second of which will explore ‘the aesthetics of return’. This framework is designed to encourage students to read contemporary texts as works that might simultaneously adopt a deterritorializing impulse towards categories like the real, the historical, the nation, while also enacting their spectral return.

- Core course 2, ‘Postwar to Contemporary’, will provide the essential intellectual groundwork for the more recent exploration of the contemporary that will take place in core course 1. This second course provides some crucial literary and historical contexts from 1945 onwards, addressing the contexts of post-war reconstruction, decolonisation, the fate of avant-garde art, and theories of postmodernity and globalization. Shared with the MA Modern and Contemporary Literature, this course enables students a wider lens through which to view contemporary literature, while the literary focus complements the more interdisciplinary focus of core course 1.

- Through a range of literary and interdisciplinary options, students have the opportunity to pursue their own interests, whether they lie in developments in contemporary poetics, US, British, or postcolonial literatures, contemporary theoretical approaches to art or socio-historical approaches to the literary and cultural constructions of vectors like nation, race, diaspora, gender, sexuality, class. The MA provides a comprehensive programme of study that covers the aesthetic, historical and political dimensions of contemporary literature and culture.

- While the intention is to initially draw on and develop provision in contemporary literature within English and Humanities, as the MA develops over the next five years it is envisaged that its situation in the new School of Arts will facilitate the sharing and development of provision. This will enable the programme to extend its coverage of contemporary culture.

- The programme offers part-time, evening, face-to-face study.
Entry Requirements and Admissions Policy (See Guidance Note 15)

A good Second Class Honours in a BA degree in Literature, Cultural Studies, History, or other relevant subject. Where normal entry requirements are not met, the programme will follow the School of Arts' Admission procedure in considering professional experience and other qualifications relevant to the course.

Learning Outcomes

Please note: The learning outcomes for approved modules in the programme and for the programme as a whole should relate to the overall aims of the programme and should be measurable and achievable. To gain the qualification the student will have demonstrated the skills specified in the learning outcomes for approved modules in the programme and for the programme as a whole. Learning outcomes may relate to some, or all, of the following categories: Subject Specific, Intellectual, Practical, Personal and Social.

Please number the learning outcomes (L.O.) for cross-referencing to the modules in section 19 of this form.

On successful completion of this programme a student will be expected to be able to:

Subject specific:

1. Demonstrate comprehensive grounding in some of the key trends and texts in the field of contemporary literature and culture.
2. Engage in debates about the conceptualization of the contemporary, deploying the appropriate vocabulary and critical paradigms.
3. Identify and engage with the key features and characteristics of new forms of writing that have emerged as a result of new technologies, particularly the internet.
4. Engage with theoretical and critical texts and apply their findings to close analysis of literary and cultural forms.
5. Identify appropriate research methods for the study of contemporary literature and culture.
6. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the historical contexts in which literary paradigms and forms emerge.

Intellectual:

7. Develop a multidisciplinary approach to the study of contemporary literature and culture.
8. Demonstrate the ability to think the literary alongside other cultural forms (such as visual media).
9. Show the ability to apply theoretical and critical materials to self-chosen examples.
10. Read texts closely and critically.
11. Demonstrate the ability to mount an argument independently and with an awareness of a critical field.
12. Engage in critical debate with peers in seminar situations.

Practical:

13. Present work in seminar situations.
14. Develop skills of expression and argument in writing and also discussion and presentation skills.
15. Enhance bibliographic research skills.
16. Where appropriate devise interdisciplinary research skills (including other forms of data gathering, archival work, use of interviews, and methods appropriate to other media).

Personal and social:

17. Encounter a range of students from different disciplinary, international and ethnic backgrounds.
18. Plan and pursue independent study and realize intellectual goals.
19. Work as part of a group.
20. Conduct discussion and listen to others’ opinions in a productive and mutually supportive manner.
21. Reflect on one’s learning process.
22. Respond to feedback in a constructive way.
23. Enhance time-management skills.

Internal and External Factors Considered in Developing the Programme (to be completed by the Head of the proposing Department or Chair of the School’s Teaching and Quality Enhancement Committee (See Guidance Note 17)

This section should detail the internal and external factors which led to the programme being developed and how these informed the development of the learning outcomes. Please see the Guidance Notes for examples.
MA Contemporary Literature and Culture follows the College’s Teaching and Learning strategy in developing ‘research-led’ teaching by drawing on areas of research excellence in English and Humanities (contemporary literature, culture and theory) and disseminating the research in MA level teaching that emphasizes interdisciplinary research skills and which anticipates future research and/or employment in the areas of publishing, the media, and the arts more widely.

The MA also meets the College’s Teaching and Learning strategy in its appeal to the traditional Birkbeck student body seeking part-time evening teaching as well as opening up MA level options for undergraduate students seeking to enhance their research skills and their knowledge of contemporary literature and culture.

In addition, the MA dovetails with the School of Arts’ recruitment objectives – concerned with expanding student numbers – as outlined in the Strategic Plan. This MA will build on existing provision within English and Humanities while attracting a new pool of students.

In the longer term the intention is to expand our range of options in contemporary culture by developing links with other departments in the School of Arts. This fits into the School’s strategy of increasing collaboration between departments in Arts.

The programme fits with the Common Awards Scheme in that in order to qualify for the award of the MA postgraduate degree, students must obtain 180 credits at level 7, meeting all the requirements of the programme specification including passing all core modules.

The programme’s learning outcomes meet the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications for Masters degrees in that in order to pass, students will have to demonstrate a systematic and comprehensive knowledge of the field of Contemporary Literature and Culture, including a conceptual understanding that shows independence and originality in the application of knowledge. It will enable students to develop the requisite skills in terms of communication and self-directed learning, thus imparting a set of transferable skills that will equip students for employment.

The programme also accords with the Higher Education Credit Framework for England.

In terms of competition, the only obvious competitor in the Greater London area is Brunel’s MA Contemporary Literature and Culture. Birkbeck’s MA will be different from this one in a number of respects: its focus will be more recent, it will offer some coverage of but will be less preoccupied by debates about postmodernism, and it will offer students a range of options to supplement the core course whereas Brunel’s course is focused around four fixed core courses. Brunel’s full-time course also involves afternoon teaching whereas Birkbeck would be unique in offering a course that can be more easily combined with full-time employment.

While Birkbeck’s MA Contemporary Literature and Culture will be the only one of its kind in Central London, the only other competitor in the rest of the country is the University of Manchester’s MA Contemporary Literature and Culture.

As the attached report by Birkbeck’s Marketing Manager, Jonah Duffin, illustrates, there are only six masters degrees in Modern and Contemporary Literature across the country. This is an expanding field and, as the success of Birkbeck’s already existing MA Modern and Contemporary Literature demonstrates, an increasingly popular area for students. Birkbeck’s new MA will be ideally placed to benefit from growth in this area. As Duffin concludes, ‘Birkbeck will be the first choice for many students in London wanting to study on a course of this nature due to multiple factors including; the reputation of Birkbeck and especially the English department, its location in central London, the evening delivery, the lack of competition and the unique nature of the course.’
Teaching and Learning Methods (See Guidance Note 18)

The course will be mainly taught through seminars which will be supplemented by lectures – these lectures will bring together a range of expert voices in contemporary studies. In addition, we intend to bring in guest speakers including a panel of contemporary poets to give students some direct contact with practicing writers.

Participation is encouraged by small-group teaching, and the teaching and learning methods encourage the personal development of students because the assessment modes of assessed discursive essays and the dissertation are all directed by the students’ own interests. Individual tutorials will enable the students to relate their ideas cogently to the literary and theoretical aspects of the programme.

Teaching and learning will also be supported by Blackboard resources.

Programme Requirements (See Guidance Note 19)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>Code (specify if new module)</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>L.O. Ref.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>AREN09 5S7</td>
<td>Core one: Reading the Contemporary</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>1-5; 7-12; 13-16; 17-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ENHU05 0S7</td>
<td>Core two: Postwar to Contemporary</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>1, 4, 6, 7-12; 13-16; 17-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ENHU00 3D7</td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>1-6; 7-11; 14; 15-16; 18; 21-23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Option one</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Comp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Option two</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Comp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note for new programmes only: If the programme includes new module(s) the appropriate module proposal form(s) must be submitted with this proposal.

Option Modules List (group by Level if appropriate) (This should be an indicative list. Other suitable options may be included with the approval of the Programme Director.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>L.O. Ref.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>AREN094S7</td>
<td>Narrating Nation after 9/11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1,3,4,6,7-12; 13-16; 17-23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ENHU053S7</td>
<td>Contemporary US Fiction</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1, 3, 4, 6, 7-12; 13-16; 17-23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ENHU061S7</td>
<td>Contemporary British Poetry</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1, 3, 4, 6, 7-12; 13-16; 17-23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Contemporary British Fiction</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1, 3, 4, 6, 7-12; 13-16; 17-23.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BIRKBECK (UNIVERSITY OF LONDON)
PROGRAMME PROPOSAL / SPECIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credit</th>
<th>Exam Periods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FDGD01</td>
<td>Contemporary Lesbian Fiction: Sexual and Textual Politics</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1, 4, 5, 7-12; 13-16; 17-23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENHU02</td>
<td>Memory, Trauma, and Cultural Identity</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1, 4, 5, 7-12; 13-16; 17-23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENHU12</td>
<td>Language Matters: Language, the Brain and the Twentieth-Century Word</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1, 4, 5, 7-12; 13-16; 17-23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENHU11</td>
<td>A Confusion of Tongues: Illness, Language, Writing</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1, 4, 5, 7-12; 13-16; 17-23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENHU05</td>
<td>The Post-Colonial Novel and Post-Colonial Discourse</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1, 4, 5, 7-12; 13-16; 17-23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENHU03</td>
<td>Aesthetics and Cultural Theory</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 6, 7-12; 13-16; 17-23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDGD01</td>
<td>Queer Histories, Queer Cultures</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1, 4, 6, 7-12; 13-16; 17-23.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment strategy and methods (See Guidance Note 20)

Methods of assessment need to be delineated here and the balance between coursework and examination identified. Minimum pass marks should be made clear as should the number of resits/re-assessments allowed through the Common Awards Scheme in any one year (full-time and part-time modes). Barriers to academic progression, such as a failure in specific modules should be made explicit. Where appropriate the weighting between levels for final degree classification should be made clear. This will be especially important at Bachelors level. Marking and moderation and feedback procedures should also be provided.

The assessment strategy, including the rationale for the assessment methods utilised, should be provided (see the guidance notes for advice here).

Before completing this section you should consult the College Regulations (http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/casregs.doc/view) as well as the QAA Code of practice, section 6 'Assessment of Students' (see: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section6/default.asp).

Dissertation: 15,000 words (60 cats points)
Core 1: Reading the Contemporary: one 5,000 word essay (100%) (30 cats points)
Core 2: Post-War to Contemporary: one 5,000 word essay (100%) (30 cats points)
Option Courses, each counting for 30 cats points. These are usually assessed by one 5,000 essay each, but assessment modes may vary from option to option, especially across departments.

Marks across the 2 core courses and 2 option courses are averaged and this figure constitutes 67% weighting. The dissertation is weighted at 33% of the final degree classification.

Assessment procedures are in line with CAS regulations.

Methods for Evaluating and Enhancing Quality and Standards of this Programme

These should include consideration of external examiners' reports and the independent moderation of assessed essays/dissertations, use of double marking etc; accreditation by any relevant professional/statutory/regulatory body as well as any industrial input; how research work/culture interacts with teaching activity including the RAE rating or if the School/Department contains a specialist Research Centre. Other indicators would include analysis of student evaluation questionnaires; teaching team meetings; team and joint teaching; PDR; peer observation; end-of-year reviews; student-staff exchange committee meetings; College internal reviews and annual programme reporting; analysis of entry and exit qualifications, progression and completion rates, measured against the profiles of students. This section should include reference to the processes through which good practice is disseminated.

The suggested wording below may be used and items added or deleted as appropriate.
Procedures for maintaining standards include:

- the annual review of the programme by relevant Department/Programme committees;
- consideration of relevant external examiners’ reports, comments on individual examination papers and contributions at the examiners’ meeting;
- use of double marking and the independent moderation of all examination elements;
- analysis of entry and exit qualifications, progression and completion rates, measured against the profiles of students;
- scrutiny of standards by the College Teaching and Quality Enhancement Committee (TQEC) via annual programme reporting, required responses to external examiners’ reports and internal review visits by a TQEC Quality Monitoring Working Group;
- input from the Research Excellence Framework;
- input from industry and the profession via accreditation processes, advisory panels, and the variety of professional activities of members of the School/Department;
- student feedback from questionnaires, comment forms, student representatives, student-staff exchange committee meetings;
- procedures facilitating the spread of good practice via peer observation, team and joint teaching, teaching team meetings, PD and second examining at other institutions, participation in Quality Monitoring Working Groups, attendance at events and courses organized by relevant bodies such as Birkbeck’s Centre for Learning and Professional Development (CLPD) and the Higher Education Academy’s (HEA) Subject Centres.

22 Student Support and Guidance Arrangements

Programme Specific: The strategy for academic and pastoral support for students should be outlined here explaining how this is consistent with the profile of Birkbeck students and the overall aims of the programme. Details of induction arrangements should also be given and how any special learning needs are identified e.g. study skills sessions and provision for disadvantaged groups (low-income; low linguistic/numeric skills; students with disabilities). Details should be provided of the tutorial arrangements on the programme. The wording below should also be included in this section.
Birkbeck Students' Union promotes welfare issues, represents students' interests on College committees and provides social activities via events and societies. All students are automatically members of the union (although they can opt out if they wish) which entitles them to use all the facilities and services on offer. Birkbeck Union is affiliated to the National Union of Students (NUS). (see: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/su/).

Birkbeck Evening Nursery is available between 5.30pm and 9.00pm (Monday to Friday) during Term Time for students and current members of staff and accepts children aged 2 years - 10 years. In exceptional circumstances, children up to 12 will be accepted (see: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/nursery/about).

The Disability Office provides detailed information on the provision for students with disabilities at the College. It advises on applying to the College and outlines the support available from the College Disability Co-ordinator, Library Services, Information Technology Services (ITS), Students' Union and the Disability Liaison Officers within each School. It also provides details of special examination arrangements and additional financial support for disabled students (see: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/disability).

Financial support is available for those on low incomes who would otherwise be prevented from participating in higher education. This is coordinated by the Student Financial Support Office, which deals with the Government's new part-time student support arrangements as well as supporting the College's own initiatives to provide targeted bursaries, scholarships and awards from donors (see: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/studentfinance). Government statutory funding is only available for undergraduate programmes.

Careers guidance, information and advice are available to all Birkbeck degree students via the University of London Specialist Institutions' Careers Service (SICS). Information about careers and occupations events, graduate destinations, full and part-time vacancies, employer talks, further study and training, working abroad, vacation jobs is displayed on School notice boards, web pages and WebCT (see: http://www.careers.lon.ac.uk/output/Page358.asp).

Personal Development Planning opportunities have been introduced for all Birkbeck undergraduate students and the locus and provision of both this and other services such as study skills, academic English provision, counselling and advisory centre, is co-ordinated by the Centre for Learning and Professional Development (CLPD) located in the new foyer space in the Malet Street building. The Centre works with central and School-based learning support officers to support Schools in providing student learning support and coordinates that provided by the Library, ITS and the Students' Union (see: http://www.clpd.bbk.ac.uk/).

Programme-specific support and guidance arrangements should be inserted below (see guidance above). During Induction week, the MA Contemporary Literature and Culture programme will hold two evening events: an Induction evening in which students will be introduced to academic staff and each other, and receive information about the structure of the programme, the Department/School and their collaboration and the support structures in place for Birkbeck students. Students will be given a Handbook which details all aspects for the programme, staff and student responsibilities and facilities. Students will meet both the Programme Directors and Personal Tutors at this point. The second event held in Induction week will be an Introduction to Academic Writing session, run by Dr Fleur Rothschild, the Department of English & Humanities tutor for Academic Writing. Students will continue to be supported in their acquisition of academic writing skills throughout the course of the programme in various ways. The Department of English and Humanities will be running a full 9-week 'Academic Writing' course in Term 1, which will be open to MA Contemporary Literature and Culture students and Dr Fleur Rothschild offers one-to-one drop-in sessions throughout term time.

Academic pastoral support is offered through various channels: Programme Director, class tutors and personal tutors. In addition, students can make contact with the Executive Dean of the School of Arts and the Head of the Department of English and Humanities. Study skills training will be incorporated throughout the programme.
The MA Contemporary Literature and Culture adheres to the full regulations laid out in the Common Awards Scheme, Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study 2009/10.

Programme Specific regulations are:

Entry Requirements: A good Second Class Honours in a BA degree in Literature, Cultural Studies, History, or other relevant subject. Where normal entry requirements are not met, the programme will follow the School of Arts’ Admission procedure in considering professional experience and other qualifications relevant to the course.

Course duration: 1 year full-time or 2 years part-time

Course outline (full-time):
Term 1: Core 1 ‘Reading the Contemporary’
Term 1: Core 2 ‘Postwar to Contemporary’
Term 2: Option module 1 (to be taken from the ‘MA Contemporary Literature and Culture’ list)
Term 2: Option module 2 (to be taken from the ‘MA Contemporary Literature and Culture’ list)
Summer: Dissertation

Course outline (part-time)
Term 1, Year 1: Core 1, ‘Reading the Contemporary’
Term 2, Year 1: Option module 1 (to be taken from the ‘MA Contemporary Literature and Culture’ list)
Term 1, Year 2: Core 2 ‘Postwar to Contemporary’
Term 2, Year 2: Option module 2 (to be taken from the ‘MA Contemporary Literature and Culture’ list)
Summer, Year 2: Dissertation

Prospectus Entry
Please include a link to the web site here.
http://www bbk.ac.uk/study/pg2011/humanities/TMACONLT.html

Teaching Staff (See Guidance Note 25)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (incl. academic title)</th>
<th>FT or PT</th>
<th>Department/School (for Birkbeck staff)</th>
<th>External Institution (for external staff)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme Director</td>
<td>Dr Anna Hartnell</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>English and Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birkbeck/external teaching staff</td>
<td>Professor Roger Luckhurst</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>English and Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr Joe Brooker</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>English and Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr Kate McLouglin</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>English and Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professor Esther Leslie</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>English and Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr Mpalive Msiska</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>English and Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr Carol Watts</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>English and Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr Laura Salisbury</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>English and Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr Joanne Winning</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>English and Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr Heike Bauer</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>English and Humanities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sessional teaching staff
* please supply an up to date c.v. of all sessional teaching staff

Include details of any technical staff
N/A

SECTION B  PROGRAMME PROPOSAL DETAILS
MA Contemporary Literature and Culture is unique in its focus on issues raised by post-2000 literature and culture, which will be studied from various aesthetic, historical and theoretical perspectives.

- MA Contemporary Literature and Culture places at its heart analysis of the question of the ‘contemporary’ – what characterises it, how such a slippery concept can be theorized, how cultural products themselves reflect on that category and its associated problems. In this way the programme is distinct from, but also complementary to, the two other MA programmes run by English and Humanities at Birkbeck: MA Modern and Contemporary Literature and MA Cultural and Critical Studies. More interdisciplinary than the former and more literary than the latter, this MA will distinguish itself from both by its centralization of key debates that circulate around the question of the contemporary.

- As outlined above, in terms of competition, the only obvious competitor in the Greater London area is Brunel’s MA Contemporary Literature and Culture. Birkbeck’s MA will be different from this one in a number of respects: its focus will be more recent, it will offer some coverage of but will be less preoccupied by debates about postmodernism, and it will offer students a range of options to supplement the core course whereas Brunel’s course is focused around four fixed core courses. Brunel’s full-time course also involves afternoon teaching whereas Birkbeck would be unique in offering a course that can be more easily combined with full-time employment.

- While Birkbeck’s MA Contemporary Literature and Culture will be the only one of its kind in Central London, the only other competitor in the rest of the country is the University of Manchester’s MA Contemporary Literature and Culture.

- As the attached report by Birkbeck’s Marketing Manager, Jonah Duffin, illustrates, there are only six masters degrees in Modern and Contemporary Literature across the country. This is an expanding field and, as the success of Birkbeck’s already existing MA Modern and Contemporary Literature demonstrates, an increasingly popular area for students. Birkbeck’s new MA will be ideally placed to benefit from growth in this area. As Duffin concludes, ‘Birkbeck will be the first choice for many students in London wanting to study on a course of this nature due to multiple factors including; the reputation of Birkbeck and especially the English department, its location in central London, the evening delivery, the lack of competition and the unique nature of the course.’

**Target Student Groups:**
The MA Contemporary Literature and Culture offers interdisciplinary training which will provide students with specialized knowledge in the cutting edge of contemporary culture. This not only represents a possible avenue to further academic research at PhD level – in a currently expanding field – but it will also equip students who wish to work in publishing, media, and the arts more generally with the appropriate specialist knowledge and vocabulary. The MA will also provide training in more generic skills related to research, analysis, writing and public speaking. The market for this degree has been established by the consistent popularity of the existing MA Modern and Contemporary Literature, the demand for which has exceeded capacity. Many existing undergraduate and postgraduate students have voiced their desire to specialize in contemporary literature at MA level, so we fully anticipate a healthy uptake for this MA.

**Subject Team expertise:** MA Contemporary Literature and Culture draws on the research and teaching specialisms as well as the intellectual environment of the School of Arts. It is supported by two new appointments in English and Humanities, Anna Hartnell who has been appointed to introduce the new MA and Kate McLoughlin, whose work also encompasses aspects of contemporary writing.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Supersession</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does the programme supersede an existing programme?</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If Yes please specify</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Proposed fee</strong> <em>(See Guidance Note 3)</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard or other:</strong> If other please state proposals for FT (Home), PT, Distance, NL, FT/PT Overseas as appropriate and reasons.</td>
<td>Standard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4 Suggested advertising media
- Birkbeck Arts Week
- English and Humanities website
- Google search

Depending on Departmental advertising policy, Facebook, Twitter, advertisements on relevant journals.

### 5 Staff Development *(See Guidance Note 5)*
Regular peer assessment within the Birkbeck School of Arts and English Department.
Yearly appraisals will be conducted for all staff involved in the MA.
The staff team will meet regularly to discuss pedagogical issues.
The English Department holds a teaching day once a year in which best practice is shared and discussed.
Staff development opportunities offered by the School of Arts and the College.

### 6 Resources *(See Guidance Note 6)*
Please note that the teaching and learning must be sufficiently flexible to enable all reasonable adjustments to be made in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) *(please see the Guidance Notes for further details)*.

**Are additional resources required for this programme?**  
NO  
(Delete as appropriate)

**If YES, please give details of additional resources required. Confirm that consultation has taken place in all cases with relevant colleagues supporting these services (detailed below) to indicate agreement, ensuring that the full costs of providing these have been taken into account. This consultation should be evidenced by covering emails.**

**Accommodation – additional resources required:**

| Consultation with Room Bookings: | YES |
**Library**

Have you discussed library provision for the programme with your subject librarian?  **Yes**

(in doing so, the following questions should be considered (unless already considered in the outline proposal):

- Has an indicative bibliography been developed?  If so, this should be appended to this proposal.
- Are any new journals required?  If so, please list all new journals required.
- Are any new e-resources required e.g. e-journals, e-books, databases?
- Are any extra print copies or new print materials required e.g. extra copies of existing books or new materials such as books currently not held by the Library?
- Are you planning to make available readings online on Blackboard?  This may have copyright implications – please talk to your Subject Librarian.  Guidance on copyright is available at: [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/about/userinfo/st/copyright/view](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/about/userinfo/st/copyright/view).
- Does the programme require access to any other Library?  If so, which one(s)?

All requests for new resources will have to be discussed with the appropriate Subject Librarian as they will have budgetary implications.

**Media Services Centre (in operation from November 2010)**

Are there any special media support or photographic requirements and, if so, have these been discussed with the Media Services Manager?  **No**

**ITS**

Has consultation taken place regarding any requirements for the use of specific software packages or IT facilities (including workstation rooms) with the User Support Manager within the Information Technology Services (ITS) Department?  **Yes**

**Other**

Please state requirements for any other resources and give details of any external funding.  **N/A**

---

### Agreement (See Guidance Note 7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author of this proposal*</td>
<td>Anna Hartnell</td>
<td>6 December 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Director (or indicate if the same as above)</td>
<td>Anna Hartnell</td>
<td>6 December 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Department (or Executive Dean for School held programmes)*</td>
<td>Professor Sue Wiseman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Dean (in consultation with the School Manager)</td>
<td>Professor Hilary Fraser</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Programme Approval Form for an External Subject Specialist completed and attached?**  **Yes / No

| Chair of STQEC (including date of STQEC meeting at which outline proposal approved) (See Guidance Note 8) | Dr Martin Shipway, 27 October 2010 |

---

Following endorsement of an Outline Programme Proposal by the College Programmes Committee to proceed to consideration by a Programme Development Panel a full Programme Proposal Form must be submitted to the Head of Quality Enhancement and Validation (Registry Services).  This should be in line with the deadline agreed with the School Teaching and Quality Enhancement Committee.  The agreed dates should allow for consideration and approval to be given during the academic year preceding the session in which the new degree would begin.  YOU MUST OBTAIN ALL OF THE ABOVE SIGNATURES AND MUST ALSO ENSURE ALL OF THE ABOVE CONSULTATION HAS TAKEN PLACE AND IS EVIDENCED BY COVERING EMAILS BEFORE THE FORM MAY BE SUBMITTED.

* In signing this form the author of the proposal and the Head of Department (or Executive Dean) confirm that all contributing Departments/Schools, including relevant Module Leaders, have been consulted regarding the proposal and are in agreement with this.

** An appropriate External Subject Specialist must complete the form attached overleaf before it may be submitted for consideration.
External Subject Specialists will be asked to take part in a relevant Programme Development Panel either through attendance at a meeting to discuss the proposal or by correspondence.

| 1. Title of proposed programme | MA Contemporary Literature and Culture |
| 2. Name of External Subject Specialist | Professor Peter Boxall |
| 3. Present post and place of work | School of English, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9QN |
| Tel: 01273 678719 Email:p.boxall@sussex.ac.uk |
| 5. Details of any current or previous involvement with cognate programmes or with the College | None with any cognate postgraduate programmes, but am currently beginning my first year as external examiner in the BA. |
| 6. Comments on the proposed programme | This proposal is entirely appropriate as an M level programme, in line with QAA frameworks and subject benchmarks, and with similar programmes in comparable institutions. |
| 6a. appropriateness of the proposal in relation to the College’s Common Awards Scheme, national Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, Higher Education Credit Framework for England, relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements and, where appropriate, Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements (see ‘Academic Infrastructure’ at: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/default.asp) | |
| 6b. overall philosophy, aims and learning outcomes of the programme | This is a very exciting proposal, which has a tightly focused set of aims and learning outcomes. To focus a programme on the near present is a difficult thing to do, as the intellectual outline of the present is often blurred. Even questions such as canonicity are sometimes difficult to address when the historical perspective is brought so close. But what this programme makes extremely clear is that the literature and thought of the new century is becoming recognisable in its own right, and demands some new critical languages and idioms to address it. The programme is set up extremely well to address this pressing cultural question, and is likely to produce some fresh, original and groundbreaking work. The proposed learning outcomes are well judged and achievable in their own right, but this programme also has the potential, through its uniqueness, to become a centre for new thinking about the contemporary, and thus to stimulate doctoral work, and other forms of innovative scholarship. |
| 6c. admissions policies | Proposed admissions policies are in line with other similar programmes in comparable institutions. |
| 6d. curriculum content, balance and relevance of the programme | It is important to get the content and balance of a programme such as this right. The danger of a programme focused on the last decade is that it could appear rootless. We don't know much about the 21st century, apart from that it will change, so a programme based exclusively on our century risks intellectual myopia, and also of a kind of structural obsolescence. The programme, however, is set up to address these concerns. The paired core courses in the first term (full time) look two ways: the course ‘Postwar to the Contemporary’ requires students to place the contemporary within the broader historical and cultural context of the second half of the twentieth century – the context indeed that is the framework for other comparable Modern and Contemporary MAs in the UK. The other core course, ‘Reading the Contemporary’, will require the students to train their focus on the new century, drawing on the wider perspective generated by the other core course. In this way students will be able to think in an informed way about how theoretical and literary inheritances are adapting under the historical pressures of the contemporary. The options in the second half of the programme will then allow students to develop their thinking in the wider interdisciplinary environment offered by Birkbeck. This will allow, in my opinion, for an address to the present that will be inventive and critically agile, as well as theoretically and historically informed. My only question about curriculum content would be about the nature of the options taken in the second half of the taught period. Would these be required to have a 21st century dimension? Will the teaching team be designing new courses to |
offer as options in this slot in the coming years?

6e. teaching and learning strategies
These are appropriate and robust, and in line with other comparable institutions. The provision of lectures in addition to seminars on the MA is an impressive supplement to contact and teaching time.

6f. assessment criteria and methods and award specific regulations
These are in line with other comparable institutions.

6g. expertise, leadership and development of the teaching team
The teaching team for this course are amongst the very best in the country, and internationally, for teaching modern and contemporary literature and culture. The team is characterised by an approach to the contemporary which is theoretically informed without being faddish, and which combines theoretical and historical rigour and scholarship with intellectual invention and originality – the best environment for a programme of this kind.

6h. resource provision and facilities for the programme
Good. The very large and well established postgraduate community at Birkbeck is a strong resource in itself.

6i. programme management and student feedback and support arrangements
As above, in line with other institutions.

7. Agreement
Signature: Peter Boxall
Date: 3rd January 2010

Guidance Notes for Departments/Schools selecting an appropriate External Subject Specialist

1. External subject specialists should provide experience of at least one of the following:
   • Higher Education in the subject and at the appropriate level
   • Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies, where programmes involve such accreditation or recognition
   • practice in the relevant profession or area of specialism

2. The following criteria should be taken into account in selecting an appropriate External Subject Specialist:
   • the depth and relevance of their subject knowledge
   • impartiality - External Subject Specialists should be able to offer constructive criticism of the proposal and must not be either current or recent (i.e. within the previous three years) staff of the College

3. For reasons of impartiality, currently approved External Examiners will not usually be used as External Subject Specialists, unless a case can be made for them being the most appropriate person.

4. The involvement of an External Subject Specialist would only be deemed unnecessary in cases where a Department/School can demonstrate that its own specialist external advisory group has already provided effective external and appropriately critical scrutiny of the programme proposal. This might, for example, take the form of minutes of an Industrial Liaison Panel which should be appended to the proposal form.

5. External Subject Specialists will be paid £50 for each proposal considered by correspondence only and £100 (plus travel expenses) for each proposal considered by attendance at a meeting of a Programme Development Panel. This fee may be increased where a number of cognate proposals are considered at the same time. The Quality Enhancement and Validation section of Registry Services will contact all External Subject Specialists to arrange payment of their fee.