

BA ENGLISH

Guide for Applicants

2013-2014

Contents	Page
Term Dates	2
Introduction	3
How to Apply	5
BA English Degree Structure	7
First Year English Modules	8
Years 2 and After: English Modules	11
Administrative Information for New Students	13
Accommodation	14
Academic Advice and Support	16
Study Skills and Learning Support	17
Disability Statement	18
Frequently Asked Questions	21
Contact Details: Staff and MyBirkbeck	23

Term Dates 2013-14

<u>Autumn Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>	<u>Summer Term</u>
Monday 30 September 2013 to Friday 13 December 2013	Monday 6 January 2014 to Friday 21 March 2014	Monday 28 April 2014 to Friday 11 July 2014
<u>Autumn Closures</u>	<u>Spring Closures</u>	<u>Summer Closures</u>
The College will close at 5pm on Monday 23 December 2013, re-opening at 9am on Wednesday, 2 January 2014	Easter closure <i>to be confirmed</i>	<p>The College will be closed on Monday, 5 May 2014 re-opening at 9am on Tuesday, 6 May 2014</p> <p>The College will be closed on Monday, 26 May 2014, re-opening at 9am on Tuesday, 27 May 2014</p> <p>The College will be closed from 8pm Friday, 22 August 2014, re-opening at 9am on Tuesday, 26 August 2014</p>

Introduction

Thinking of applying to study BA English at Birkbeck? This guide includes information that will help you find out more about what we offer, how to take the next steps, and what the structure of the English degree involves for both part-time and full-time students. You can also look us up and explore online at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/english/>, and there are further links within the guide for you to pursue. We look forward to finding out more about you.

Birkbeck, University of London

Birkbeck, University of London is a unique institution with a proud history. Founded as the London Mechanics Institute in 1823, it was subsequently incorporated into the University of London in 1926, specialising in education at university level for part-time students, for which it holds a royal charter. In the twenty-first century, both full-time and part-time students now benefit from Birkbeck's long tradition of outstanding teaching expertise and support, as well as its international academic renown. Voted number one in London for quality of teaching by students in the 2012 National Student Survey, Birkbeck is a vibrant place to study.

BA classes at Birkbeck begin at 6pm. Full-time students will find the evening teaching hours free them to take full advantage of the opportunities for study and development during the day, when the resources of the college, libraries, and London itself, are fully available. Part-time students who work during the day, and may be older than the conventional student in higher education, will discover staff are well versed in, and sympathetic to, their particular needs.

Academic staff at Birkbeck combine teaching with an active engagement in research. Many of your teachers will be highly-regarded authorities on the subjects that they teach. This means that the modules that you take will reflect the most recent scholarship and approaches within the field of English Literature.

Location

Birkbeck College is in the heart of the Bloomsbury district in the centre of London, one minute walk from the British Museum and five minutes from the British Library. It is next door to the major collections of the Senate House Library, and to University of London Union, with its sports, clubs and leisure facilities. The Department of English in the School of Arts is located at 43 Gordon Square, WC1, in an elegant block of houses which were once the home of the novelist Virginia Woolf, and the economist John Maynard Keynes. Find us at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/maps>.

What is an honours degree in English?

Reading English involves a critical engagement with a wide variety of texts, ranging from Medieval literature to contemporary writing; the student must develop critical and analytic skills that enable one to explore texts in a questioning and independent way.

Wide reading, attention to historical connections, and the close study of texts are essential for the successful completion of a degree in English. Critical skills are valuable in themselves, bringing with them an understanding of linguistic complexity and, more broadly, a capacity to analyse and interpret the cultural context in which we live. Learning different modes of writing, the way to frame and extend interpretation and argument, is also part of the experience, as is the confident developing of your independent 'voice' in that process.

Why study in the Department of English and Humanities at Birkbeck?

The Department of English and Humanities is one of the liveliest and most successful university departments in the country. In the 2008 national Research Assessment Exercise, 90% of our research was judged to be of quality that is internationally recognised, of which 35% was declared to be 'world-leading'.

For students this means a dynamic environment in which to study with some of the most outstanding specialists in their fields. And variety: the chance to explore modules from Old Norse sagas and medieval lyrics to novels by Charles Dickens and contemporary US fiction. Or, if you choose, to move perhaps from the beginnings of the horror genre in 1764 to Stephen King and modern horror films. Many of the modules draw upon different kinds of media and resources. There's also the chance in the final year to write a research project of your own, and close links with other programmes which mean that electives in the wider School of Arts (<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/arts/>) may also be available to you.

The department runs a large number of highly successful MA programmes from the medieval period to the contemporary. It has an outstanding doctoral programme with around 100 students currently researching. Many BA students at Birkbeck continue with us to more advanced levels of study on successful completion of their degree. Graduates can go on to careers in writing and journalism, editing, publishing, teaching, marketing, public relations, and as researchers. Those in employment often use the degree to switch direction, or to advance their prospects, as well as to study face-to-face in an area they are passionate about. The student body at Birkbeck is richly connected to the working life of London, which is especially valuable in the current climate. We believe in making that experience of learning exceptional.

How to Apply

Full-time Entry

Applications for full-time entry will only be considered through UCAS. To apply via UCAS please see their website for details: www.ucas.com. The UCAS course code for BA English (full-time) is **Q320**. Further details about the full-time BA English programme may also be found on the Birkbeck website at: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/ug/literature/UBAENGLF.html>

Entry requirements are ABB at A-level or equivalent, although we may waive these formal entry requirements and make our own assessment of your skills and knowledge. The early deadline for applications to UCAS is **15 January 2013**, although late applications may be received via UCAS until 30 June 2013. Anyone who is later than 30 June will need to apply via clearing in August 2013.

All eligible students are interviewed for the BA English degree. Full-time applicants who apply before February will be invited to attend Admissions Days within the Department, accompanied if they wish. They will be able to hear more about the department, experience a small seminar, ask questions, and attend an individual interview with a member of academic staff. Interviews last for twenty minutes. See below for more advice as to how to approach the interview. International full-time students, if unable to attend, are offered a phone interview with the admissions tutors. The next scheduled Admissions Days for full-time applicants are 6 and 27 February 2013.

Fees: details of full-time fees and information at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/undergraduate/fees>

Part-time Entry

To be considered for a place on the part-time degree, applicants should complete an online application form available from the Birkbeck website at: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/ug/literature/UBAENGLS.html> For applicants aged 21 or above there are no formal qualifications required for entrance to the degree, hence the application form should be completed as fully as possible, especially the section headed 'any other relevant skills or interests'. Please note that if you state on your application form that you have formal qualifications such as 'A' levels in any subject, you will be required to produce documentation for the Registry when you enrol. Applicants below the age of 21 will normally need to meet normal university entry requirements which for this course are ABB at A-level or equivalent, although we may waive these formal entry requirements and make our own assessment of your skills and knowledge.

We interview all eligible applicants for the BA English degree. Part-time applicants will be interviewed throughout the academic year normally on a monthly basis, and are encouraged to apply early. If you have general questions about the degree and any aspect of the application process you might like to come to our open evenings and talk to staff (details of these are at: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/prospective-events/open-evenings>).

Fees: details of part-time fees and information, including a useful video, are at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/undergraduate/fees>

The Interview

You will normally be interviewed by one or two members of the academic staff. You will not be expected to be an expert but to demonstrate an interest in the subject, which might include the range of your reading and particular interests, and why you have chosen this area of study. We interview to assess your potential to study and achieve at degree level. You are more likely to be successful at interview if you have a clear overall view of what you wish to gain from the degree, and if you have a realistic sense of the level of commitment involved. This is as much an opportunity for you to ask questions about the subjects you will be studying and to make sure that the course is right for you, as it is a chance for us to assess your suitability. The interview normally takes place in the afternoon and lasts about 20 minutes.

We interview all eligible applicants for the BA English degree, regardless of qualifications. Either before or after the interview, some applicants may in addition be asked to submit a short task (normally a commentary on a given passage or a brief essay on a book, film, exhibition, or TV programme of your choice). If you are asked to complete the entrance task, it will either be given to you at interview or sent to you by the course administrator after your interview. It is a short essay to be done in your own time. Applicants should complete the task and send it to the English Administrator as soon as possible in order to progress their application. You will also be given helpful guidelines on how to approach it.

Whom should I contact if I have problems with my application?

BA English Programme Administrator
Department of English and Humanities
Birkbeck, University of London
Malet Street
Bloomsbury, London
WC1E 7HX

Tel: 0203 073 8378

Email: englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk or e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk

BA English Programme Structure

What does the BA English degree involve?

The degree in English at Birkbeck is a University of London modular degree taken over three years (full-time) or four years (part-time). Courses which are taught over a full year have the value of one module, those which begin in either the autumn or spring terms and are taught over thirteen weeks have the value of half a module. Each module or half-module is taught and examined on a yearly basis. To receive a degree you must successfully complete twelve modules (or their equivalent).

You must pass all Level 4 modules, taken in the first year, in order to progress into your second year. However, marks for these modules will not be counted towards your final degree classification. The degree classification is based on the nine Level 5 and 6 modules you complete.

Full-time BA English programme structure (three years)

Year One	English Core Module: Reading Literature (Level 4)	English Core Module: Writing London (Level 4)	English Core Module: Critical Methods (Level 4)	English Elective Module (Level 5)
Year Two	English Core Module: The Novel (Level 5)	English Core Module: Aspects of Medieval and Renaissance Literature (Level 5)	English Elective (Level 5 or 6)	English Elective Module (Level 6)
Year Three	English Elective Module (Level 6)	English Elective Module (Level 6)	English Elective Module (Level 6)	English Elective Module or Optional Final Year Project (Level 6)

Part-time BA English programme structure (four years)

Year One	English Core Module: Reading Literature (Level 4)	English Core Module: Writing London (Level 4)	English Core Module: Critical Methods (Level 4)
Year Two	English Core Module: The Novel (Level 5)	English Core Module: Aspects of Medieval and Renaissance Literature (Level 5)	English Elective Module (Level 5)
Year Three	English Elective Module (Level 5 or 6)	English Elective Module (Level 6)	English Elective Module (Level 6)
Year Four	English Elective Module (Level 6)	English Elective Module (Level 6)	English Elective Module or Optional Final Year Project (Level 6)

First Year English Modules

What does the first year look like?

Full-time and part-time students will take the three following core modules at Level 4 during their first year of study:

Reading Literature (Mondays 6.00-7.20pm)

This module is about what we do when we read literature. It extends over two terms (Autumn and Spring). It is assessed by two essays (2,000 words each), the first to be written in the Autumn term, the second in the Spring term, plus a short piece of coursework. The essays are each worth 45% and the piece of coursework 10% of the marks for the module. Teaching takes place on Mondays from 6pm–7.20pm. Lectures will alternate with seminars (ie there will be a lecture one week, and a seminar on the same text the next week).

In this module, we will be thinking about specific issues relating to the act of reading:

- how, where, why and what we read
- beginnings, middles and endings
- difficulty
- voice
- gender

In the Autumn term, we will be considering these issues with reference to literature written after 1800 (authors are likely to include Virginia Woolf, William Wordsworth, Carol Ann Duffy, T. S. Eliot, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Gerard Manley Hopkins, D. H. Lawrence, Emily Dickinson, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Gertrude Stein, Matthew Arnold, Robert Browning and W. B. Yeats). In the Spring term, we will be considering the same issues with reference to literature written in the Medieval and Renaissance periods (authors are likely to include Geoffrey Chaucer, Henry Howard the Earl of Surrey, Edmund Spenser, George Herbert, William Shakespeare, and John Milton). Throughout, our primary focus will be on poetry.

This module will equip you with skills of interpretation and analysis that you will continue to use throughout your degree. Above all, the course will prompt you to think critically and imaginatively about your own reading practices (and others') – by the end, you should be a more reflective and rigorous reader.

Students will be assigned to seminar groups at the start of term, and students should consult their personal timetable on their MyBirkbeck student profile for information about which group they are in. Seminar leaders may change at certain times throughout the year; information will be supplied in lectures and on the School notice board.

Writing London (Tuesdays 6.00-7.20pm)

This module introduces you to different types of literature in their historical and generic contexts, and will focus on the way that London has been imagined in a wide range of texts from different periods, styles and genres. It is assessed by one coursework essay in each of the Autumn and Spring terms (the first one is a short piece of writing), and one unseen exam in the Summer term. The first essay is worth 10%, the second is worth 45% and the exam is worth 45% of the marks for the module. This course is taught on Tuesdays 6pm–7.20pm. Lectures will alternate with seminars (i.e. there will be a lecture one week, and a seminar on the same text the next week).

Writing London extends over two terms – London in Fiction in the Autumn term and London on Stage and Screen in the Spring. The Summer term, with two weeks of teaching, will focus on revision for the exam. In each section, you will be introduced to a body of literature in its historical and generic context. This course will show you how to use different types of material (literary, non-literary, critical, historical, visual, for example) to elucidate the primary material on the module.

The first session will be a lecture and it will be followed the next week by a seminar, and this pattern will be continued throughout the year. Students will be assigned to seminar groups at the start of term, and students should consult their personal timetable on their My Birkbeck student profile for information about which group they are in. Seminar leaders may change at certain times throughout the year; information will be supplied in lectures and via email.

Autumn Term: London in Fiction

The course will start with a contemporary representation of London but will then move back to the early nineteenth century to explore the developing ways that London has been represented in fiction between the nineteenth-century and the present. Studying a range of novels in different styles and genres, the course will examine the ways in which the city has been mediated through literary representations and aesthetic devices. Our approach will be broadly ‘historicist’ in that the texts studied will be situated within the literary, historical and cultural contexts that produced them.

Spring Term: London on Stage and Screen

This term will introduce students to some of the ways in which London has been represented in the theatre and film. Starting with Renaissance texts (including Shakespeare) and moving up to the twentieth century, the course will study the ways in which drama and later film have constructed the idea of ‘London’. The course will end with a filmic representation of London. The texts will be read in the context of their social, political, cultural and intellectual contexts, and questions about genre, audience, authorship and performance will be considered.

Critical Methods (Mondays 7.40-9.00pm)

This module will introduce students both to practical reading and writing skills and to the conceptual issues at stake in critical practice. Its aim is to embed

research skills into the intellectual work of the degree programme. The module is designed to help students explore the creative aspects of literary analysis with the aim of motivating students to write and read critically.

On completion of this module, students will have been introduced to the research and writing skills integral to the study of English literature at University level. More specifically, students will be able to identify the main components of an essay and have an awareness of subject-specific resources, including those provided online. Students will also have gained an understanding of the critical and theoretical questions associated with these practical skills.

This module will be taught through a mixture of seminars and lectures, which will alternate (i.e. there will be a lecture one week, and a seminar on the same text the next week). In the Autumn term, these will cover topics such as 'What is research?' 'What is a book?', 'What is an essay' and 'Words, their history and their politics'. In the Spring term, students will be introduced to the study of literary theory, and key approaches such as psychoanalysis, the role of the reader and post-colonialism.

The course will be assessed by three pieces of work: an online plagiarism exercise (worth 10% of the marks for the module) a portfolio exercise worth 45% and one essay worth 45%.

Students will be assigned to seminar groups at the start of term, and students should consult their personal timetable on their My Birkbeck student profile for information about which group they are in. Seminar leaders may change at certain times throughout the year; information will be supplied in lectures and via email.

Fourth module for full-time BA English students

In addition to the three Level 4 modules detailed above, in their first year **full-time** BA English students will in addition take a Level 5 elective module such as the following:

Tragedy (Wednesdays 7.40-9.00pm)

Students will consult theories of tragedy from Aristotle and Nietzsche to Raymond Williams and Terry Eagleton. A number of major texts within the canon of tragic literature will be studied. These are likely to include Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*; Chaucer, 'The Monk's Tale'; Shakespeare, *King Lear*; Bertolt Brecht, *Mother Courage and her Children*; Samuel Beckett, *Endgame*; Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*; Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice*. Students on the course will be encouraged to consider the virtues and limits of tragedy as a way of reading and classifying literature; the political implications of the idea of tragedy; and whether classical ideas of tragedy can remain relevant in the contemporary world. Assessment is by coursework essay (20%), extended coursework essay (40%), and exam (40%).

Year 2 and After: English Modules

What happens next?

In year two onwards you normally take three course modules in English per academic year if you are on the part-time programme, and four if you are on the full-time programme. All students take two compulsory modules in Year 2: currently *The Novel* and *Aspects of Medieval and Renaissance Literature*. In your second year you will need to pick one more elective module or two half modules to make up your credit requirements (plus an additional elective module if you are on the full-time programme). Below are descriptions of your compulsory modules followed by a list of electives.

Not all the course modules run each year – usually we offer between ten and fifteen elective modules in any one year, and often develop new areas of study. The list of course modules that are running in 2013-2014 has not yet been finalized, but following the compulsory modules listed below there is a selection of modules that have run in the past, to give you a general idea of what might be offered. **During the course of your degree you will also need to take at least one elective Medieval half unit module.** These will be clearly marked in your module options handbook which you will receive during the spring term of your first year.

We are keen to develop new modules, reflecting the particular interests of students and developments in the subject. We also draw the attention of students to other course modules taught within the Department and wider School of Arts that may be taken as part of our programme. These may include course modules on the BA Theatre Studies, BA Creative Writing or BA Humanities programmes.

Year 2 Compulsory Modules

The Novel

This course explores the nature of the novel, the most popular and diverse form of literary writing, looking at examples from the seventeenth to the twenty-first century. It is structured not by chronology but as three thematic blocks: the novel and the real; the novel and identity; and producers and consumers. Set texts are Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, J M Coetzee's *Foe*, Ali Smith's *Hotel World*, J W Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*, Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse*, D H Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Salman Rushdie's *Shame*, Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, Henry Fielding's *Shamela*, George Gissing's *New Grub Street*, Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, and Geoff Ryman's hypertext 253.

Aspects of Medieval and Renaissance Literature

This course offers an opportunity to explore a rich variety of medieval and renaissance literature. The first term will consist of a special detailed study of the wonderful late-medieval romance, *Troilus and Criseyde* by Geoffrey

Chaucer, in its original Middle English. Classes will look at the form and language of the poem as well as its social and cultural contexts. The second and third terms will look at a selection of poetry, drama and prose, offering an introduction to the divergent genres of English writing in the Renaissance period.

Selection of Elective Modules

The 'American Century' and Beyond: US Literature and Culture since 1900	Traditions and Transformations: The Work of Contemporary Nature Poetries
The Bible in English Literature	Introduction to Old English
English Language, Conquest to Dictionary	Beowulf
Elizabethan and 17 th Century Poetry	Shakespeare and Tragedy
Gothic Romance, 1764 to the Present	Blake
Coleridge	Fin de Siècle
Seeing and Imagining: Byron and Keats	The Victorians and their World
Victorian Novel	Postcolonial Biographies
Old Icelandic	African-American Literature
English Literary Modernism	Pagans, Infidels, and Jews
Contemporary British Fiction	Farce
Benjamin/Barthes	18 th Century Comic Novel
Reading Joyce's <i>Ulysses</i>	Milton and Civil War England
Queer Fiction	Writing Fiction
Comedy: Drama and Theatre in Seventeenth Century England	Medieval and Renaissance Romance

Administrative Information for New Students

What happens after I am offered a place?

Enrolment

After an offer of a place on the degree course, you need to enrol formally and pay the fees. You will be sent an email from Registry (Student Management) informing you of when are eligible to enrol online, but in case of problems you should contact the **My Birkbeck** helpdesk located in the Main Building (Malet Street). Upon enrolment you will be able to request a College Membership card to enable you to make use of the College facilities. All contact details for the My Birkbeck centre are located in the back of this booklet.

Fees/ Finance

College fees may be paid by many methods. Additional expenses will be incurred and it is important to budget for the purchase of books. Whilst we have great sympathy with students who find difficulties in paying their fees, the Course Director does not have the power to waive fees or sanction delays in payment. It is the Finance Office of the College that deals with fees and you should communicate and negotiate with them directly on 020 7631 6295. Students who fail to pay their fees may become ineligible to continue the course and to enter for assessment. Any student who has a debt to the College at the end of the year will not have their marks relayed to them. **Since October 2012, part-time students who have not previously studied at degree level have been able to apply for student loans in the same way as full-time students. For details about fees and related questions see <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/undergraduate/fees>**

Change of Address

If during the year you change your address, contact telephone numbers or email address please inform the BA English Administrator, Esther Ranson, on 0203 073 8378, e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk. In addition to your administrator, you will also be required to change your personal details via your My Studies at Birkbeck Portal (student intranet). **Failure to inform the Course Administrator or to change your information via your student portal will mean that you may miss important information concerning the course and examinations.**

E-mail

It is a **requirement** that all Birkbeck students maintain their contact details for the entirety of their degree. All documentation, reading lists, class notices, etc will be sent via the Birkbeck e-mail system. You may nominate an email via your My Studies at Birkbeck Student Portal. If you encounter any difficulty with this process please visit the My Birkbeck Helpdesk in the main Malet Street building.

Accommodation

Birkbeck does not have its own halls of residence. We have a limited quota of places in the University of London intercollegiate halls of residence (see below). There are however a diverse range of options open to you in finding student accommodation in London. If you are looking to rent accommodation, then the helpful **University of London Housing Services** should be your first point of contact:

University of London Union, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HY

Tel: 0207 862 8880

Email: housing@lon.ac.uk

You can use this service to seek help with finding accommodation or to obtain advice (including free legal advice) concerning housing. They also offer the following services:

- Short-term accommodation: you may be able to book temporary accommodation if you are having problems finding long-term housing.
- Advertising vacancies: If you own property, you can advertise your vacancies to other students via the Landlord Registration Scheme.

Other accommodation help

Birkbeck has a limited quota of places reserved in the University of London intercollegiate halls of residence available to full-time students, with full-time international students being given priority. You should also try the following:

Ashwell House (female only)
City YMCA London
Goodenough College
Homes For Students
International Students' House
London Hostels Association Ltd
London Strategic Housing
London Tourist Board
Nansen Village (singles, couples and families)
Netherhall House (male only)
Nido Student Living
Opal Property Group Student Halls
UNITE

Further information and links to the above may be found at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/accommodation>

Please note: much of the accommodation available in halls of residence is only open to full-time students.

International students

Students applying from countries outside of the European Union should contact the International Office as soon as possible for advice at: international-office@bbk.ac.uk

Helpful information for international students may be found on the Birkbeck website at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/guides/international>

For information about international student accommodation, please see the link below:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/international/accommodation>

Academic Advice and Support

At Birkbeck you'll be taken good care of. We pride ourselves on our care and the quality of contact with our students. Within the department, the School of Arts and in the College at large there is a range of support structures to enable you to realise and develop your talents and get advice face-to-face when you need it.

Programme Administrators:

The BA English Administrator is often the easiest person to contact by telephone. The BA English Administrator will usually be able to give you practical advice and will always be able to point you in the right direction for further help.

Admissions Tutors:

The Admissions Tutors for BA English in 2012 are Dr Carol Watts and Dr Ana Parejo Vadillo. You can also contact them if you have any queries during your process of application, and look out for them on Admissions Days and Open Evenings.

Personal Tutors:

Once you are on board, you will be allocated a Personal Tutor from among the academic staff. The Personal Tutor's role is largely pastoral. If you are experiencing any personal difficulties, which are affecting your academic work (work pressure, family responsibilities, illness, etc) it is important that you keep your Personal Tutor informed. The Personal Tutor will also be available to help you with course choices, the design of your degree, and any general issues about your experience of the course.

Module Convenors/ Lecturers:

If you are having difficulties with a particular module (for example, trouble meeting essay deadlines or attendance problems) or need advice on background reading or essay topics, often the person you need to speak to is the lecturer for that course, or, if there is more than one, the Module Convenor. His or her name will appear on the course documentation.

Tutor for First Years:

One member of academic staff is assigned to take special responsibility for first year students on the English programme.

Course Director for English:

The Course Director is the member of academic staff who is responsible for the overall administration of the BA English degree. Most problems should initially be directed to your Personal Tutor, although any major decisions regarding your course (i.e. requests to formally withdraw from the course or to arrange a break in studies) will need to be dealt with by the Course Director.

To contact any of these members of staff, please see the list of telephone numbers at the back of this booklet or search the Birkbeck website for further contact details. <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/eh>

Study Skills and Learning Support

Study Skills Programmes

Every Department within the School of Arts has a provision for student support and the programmes vary as they are targeted at specific degree requirements. You are encouraged to contact your administrator if you are having **any** difficulties in completing your coursework. There is help available to you at every point in your degree, and we are more than happy to guide you. We provide a continually expanding programme of induction into the basic study skills of reading, listening, note-taking and essay-writing to academic standards.

Learning Support Tutor for the School of Arts, Dr Fleur Rothschild

As Learning Support Adviser, I will supplement the assistance offered by Departments in the School of Arts to students in their first year of study. Through a programme of workshops and short courses, I will provide additional guidance on how to enhance your study performance. In consultation with Subject Directors and Personal Tutors, I will extend advice and support to individual first-year students. I look forward to meeting and introducing myself to you at Induction events.

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

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

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

www.bbk.ac.uk/ahead

Student Support: Disability Statement, Learning Support and Student Awards

Disability Statement for the Department of English and Humanities

At Birkbeck there are students with a wide range of disabilities including dyslexia, visual or hearing impairments, mobility difficulties, mental health needs, medical conditions, respiratory conditions. Many of them have benefited from the advice and support provided by the College's Disability Office.

The Disability Office

The College has a Disability Office located in room G12 on the ground floor of the Malet Street building. We have a Disability Service Manager, Mark Pimm, and a Disability Advisor, John Muya.

Mark is your first point of referral for disability enquiries at the College whilst John is for dyslexia. They can provide advice and support on travel and parking, physical access, the Disabled Students Allowance, special equipment, personal support, examination arrangements etc. If you have a disability or dyslexia, we recommend you come to our drop in session where we can discuss support and make follow up appointments as necessary. The drop-in sessions are between 4pm and 6pm Monday to Friday.

The Disability Office can also complete an individual Student Support Agreement form with you, confirming your support requirements and send this to 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 have induction loops for people with hearing impairments and we have large print and tactile signage. Disabled parking, lockers, specialist seating in lectures and seminars and portable induction loops etc can all be arranged by the Disability Office.

The Disabled Students' Allowance

UK and most EU students with disabilities on undergraduate and postgraduate courses are eligible to apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). The DSA usually 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 Office can provide further information on the DSA and can assist you in applying to Student Finance England for this support.

The Personal Assistance Scheme

Some students need a personal assistant to provide support on their course, for example a note-taker, sign language interpreter, reader, personal assistant, disability mentor or dyslexia support tutor. Birkbeck uses a specialist agency to recruit Personal Assistants and they can assist you with recruiting, training and paying your personal assistant. Please contact the Disability Office for information on this scheme.

Support in your Department

The provision which can be made for students with disabilities by Schools is set out in the Procedures for Students with Disabilities. This is available from the Disability Office and the Disability website (see below).

As mentioned above your Department will receive a copy of your Individual Student Support Agreement from the Disability Office. This will make specific recommendations about the support you should receive from the School.

Whilst we anticipate that this support will be provided by the Programme Director, tutors and School Administrator, the Department of English and Humanities also has a Student Disability Liaison Officer, Dr Stephen Clucas. If you experience any difficulties or require additional support from the Department then she may also be able to assist you. He may be contacted on 0203 073 8421 or at: s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk.

Support in IT Services and Library Services

There is a comprehensive range of specialist equipment for students with disabilities in IT Services. This includes software packages for dyslexic students (e.g. ClaroRead and Inspiration), screen reading and character enhancing software for students with visual impairments, specialist scanning software, large monitors, ergonomic mice and keyboards, specialist orthopaedic chairs etc. For advice and assistance please contact Disability IT Support. There is also a range of specialist equipment in the Library including a CCTV reading machine for visually impaired students as well as specialist orthopaedic chairs and writing slopes. The Disability Office refers all students with disabilities to the Library Access Support service who provides a comprehensive range of services for students with disabilities.

Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia)

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 which make studying significantly easier. If you think you may be dyslexic you should contact the Disability Office who can screen you and where appropriate refer you to an Educational Psychologist for a dyslexia assessment. These assessments cost £215. Some students can receive assistance in meeting this cost from their employer. In exceptional cases students may receive assistance from the Access to Learning Fund.

Examinations

Students with disabilities and dyslexia may be eligible for special arrangements for examinations e.g. extra time, use of a word processor, amanuensis, enlarged examination papers etc. In order to receive special arrangements a student must provide medical evidence of their disability (or an Educational Psychologists Report if you are dyslexic) to the Disability Office. For School examinations you should contact your Programme Director to request special arrangements at least two weeks before the examination. For main College summer examinations you are given the opportunity to declare that you require special provision on your assessment entry form. Students who require provision should then attend an appointment with the Disability Office to discuss and formalise the appropriate arrangements. The closing date for making special examination arrangements in College examinations is the 15th March and beyond this date consideration will only be given to emergency cases.

Further information

Full information on disability support can be found at:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/disability>

For further information or to make an appointment to see Mark or John, please call John Muya (Disability Advisor) on 020 7631 6336 or email disability@bbk.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can go to the Disability Office in room G12 between 4pm and 6pm Monday-Friday.

Support Team Contact Details

Mark Pimm

Disability Co-ordinator

Room G12

Birkbeck College

Malet Street

London WC1E 7HX

Telephone: 0207 631 6315

Email: m.pimm@bbk.ac.uk

John Muya

Disability Administrator

Room G12

Birkbeck College

Malet Street

London WC1E 7HX

Telephone: 0207 631 6336

Email: disability@bbk.ac.uk

Dr Stephen Clucas

Disability Liaison Officer

Department of English and Humanities

Telephone: 0203 073 8421

Email: s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk

Student Financial Support Office

Birkbeck College

Malet Street

London WC1E 7HX

Telephone: 0207 631 6362

Email:

studentfinancialsupport@bbk.ac.uk

Jackie Barnes

Examinations Officer

Telephone: 0207 380 3030

examinations@bbk.ac.uk

Lisa Mayer

Assistant Examinations Officer

Telephone: 0207 380 3039

l.mayer@bbk.ac.uk

President of the Student Union

Telephone: 0207 631 6365

Email: president@bcsu.bbk.ac.uk

Web address: www.bbk.ac.uk/su

Dr Fleur Rothschild

Learning Support Advisor

School of Arts

Room 210

43 Gordon Square

Telephone: 0203 073 8411

Email: f.rothschild@bbk.ac.uk

NB most SU information is available on the website

Frequently Asked Questions

We hope we have covered many of the important aspects of considering whether to make Birkbeck English your choice. Here are further FAQ, and below, key contact details for the English staff.

What teaching methods will be used?

As a BA English student, you will experience a wide range of teaching methods and approaches. However, teaching will usually take one of three forms: the lecture, the workshop and the seminar. Lectures normally involve relatively large groups of students listening to a formal presentation given by a member of academic staff. Workshops involve breaking a larger group into smaller subgroups and providing students with tasks or worksheets and specific questions on which they work and then report back. Seminars also involve a smaller group of students, and are designed to allow students to engage in active discussion of a chosen topic, under the direction of a tutor. In seminars students may be asked to do some preparatory reading, invited to join in a group discussion, or occasionally asked to give a short presentation to the rest of the group. Some seminars may involve audio-visual presentations, or an element of group work, and may include some degree of formal presentation by the lecturer. The approach to teaching methods will, of course, vary greatly from course to course.

What kinds of assessment should I expect?

Most modules in the English department are assessed through a combination of assessed essays and examinations, or essay work alone. Some modules might be assessed on a portfolio of shorter pieces of work or logbooks. Most courses also include shorter compulsory course essays or commentaries which carry 10% of the final grade for the module, but allow you to develop your ideas and writing before you tackle the major assessment on your module. Full information about assessment requirements is always listed in the Programme handbooks.

Will I be able to transfer credit for courses already completed?

If you wish to transfer to the BA English programme from another degree programme in the College, or from a programme in another institution, it is possible that you may be able to transfer some credit from your previous studies. If you think you are eligible for credit transfer, please consult the BA English Course Director (Dr Joe Brooker: j.brooker@bbk.ac.uk/0203 073 8415).

What about libraries?

Birkbeck has its own well stocked library situated in the main building of the College in Malet Street. The College Library is particularly geared towards the courses that are taught in the College, and you will find the staff particularly helpful in finding the materials needed for your studies. For a moderate fee – and for no charge in third and final year - Birkbeck students are also entitled to a ticket for the University of London Library in Senate House (the large white building which dominates the Malet Street skyline). This will give you access to one of the finest libraries in the capital. Many of the books and periodicals held here will not be found in the College Library. In addition to that, the College has reciprocal arrangements with many of the libraries in other colleges of the University of London, which will allow you to use some of the more specialised

libraries in the area. Information on these, and on how to register with Senate House Library, is available in the College Library in Malet Street. You will be invited to induction sessions for both the College Library and Senate House Library at the beginning of the academic year. We are also a few minutes walk from the British Library, the major national library in the UK.

Is there help with IT needs?

The College's Central Computer Services Unit, located in the main building in Malet Street, provides good computer facilities for all students. Our ITS helpdesk staff offers drop-in training, access to colour printing and scanning, and storage devices that you can buy. You can contact them by:

- tel: 020 7631 6543
- email: its@bbk.ac.uk
- in person: ITS Helpdesk, ground floor, Birkbeck main building

What happens if I have financial or other difficulties?

The College provides advice on possible sources of assistance for both part-time and full-time students, and maintains its own scheme of awards operated by the Scholarships Sub-Committee. In addition to that, there is a range of Government and College funding for which students experiencing financial hardship may apply, if eligible. Please contact the Student Financial Support for advice or to make an appointment, on Tel: 020 7631 6362 between 12–5pm, Monday to Thursday (term time), or email: studentfinancialsupport@bbk.ac.uk

Detailed information about student fees and finance for students is online at: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/undergraduate/fees>

What other services and facilities are there at Birkbeck?

As well as an excellent environment for study with numerous public events, readings and talks, the College also provides a number of services and facilities which help to provide a lively and supportive context for students. These include:

- Evening nursery facilities
- Careers advice services
- Counselling services
- Common rooms, canteens and a bar - plenty of places to meet people
- Clubs and Societies (e.g. Literary Society, French Society, History of Art Society etc)
- Its own sports ground for Football, Cricket, and Tennis
- A cinema and café in the School of Arts
- We are next door to the University of London Students' Union Building (ULU), with its excellent facilities, including swimming pool, gymnasium, squash courts, bars and shops.

For more information on these facilities see the College Prospectus and Student Union information pack.

Contact List

Academic Contacts – all staff located at 43 Gordon Square

Dr Anthony Bale	a.bale@bbk.ac.uk	0207 361 6167
Dr Nicola Bown	n.bown@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8406
Dr Joseph Brooker	j.brooker@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8415
Dr Carolyn Burdett	c.burdett@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8416
Dr Luisa Calè	l.cale@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8412
Dr Stephen Clucas	s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8421
Dr Isabel Davis	i.davis@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8414
Prof Alison Finlay	a.finlay@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8404
Dr Anna Hartnell	a.hartnell@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8413
Prof Esther Leslie	e.leslie@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8401
Dr Roger Luckhurst	r.luckhurst@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8419
Dr David McAllister	d.mcallister@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8385
Dr Kate McLoughlin	k.mcloughlin@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8420
Dr Fleur Rothschild	f.rothschild@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8411
Dr Laura Salisbury	l.salisbury@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8409
Dr Emily Senior	e.senior@bbk.ac.uk	0207 631 6100
Dr Adam Smyth	adam.smyth@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8405
Dr Ana Parejo Vadillo	a.parejovadillo@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8403
Dr Carol Watts	c.watts@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8410
Dr Joanne Winning	j.winning@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8418
Prof Sue Wiseman	s.wiseman@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8408
Dr Gillian Woods	g.woods@bbk.ac.uk	0207 631 6159

BA Programme Administrative Staff

Esther Ranson BA English, BA Theatre & BA Arts and Humanities <i>Administrator</i>	e.ranson@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8378
Annmarie Shadie BA Creative Writing <i>Administrator</i>	a.shadie@bbk.ac.uk	0203 073 8379

Contact Details for My Birkbeck

Website	http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/
Online Enquiries	http://www.bbk.ac.uk/ask/
Telephone Enquiries	Tel: 0207 631 6316 (Fax: 0207 079 0641)

We look forward to meeting you.