

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	BA English (Level 6)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	Dip HE Cert HE
Is this programme offered with a Foundation Year?	Yes
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home School/other teaching departments	School of Creative Arts, Culture and Communication
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (3 years; 4 years with Foundation Year) Part-time (4 years; 6 years with Foundation Year) September
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	English
UCAS code	Q320; Q32A (with Foundation Year)
Birkbeck Course Code	UBAENGLS_C (full-time, 3 years) UBAENGLS_C (part-time, 4 years) UUBFENGL_C (full-time with FY, 4 years) UBFENGLS_C (part-time with FY, 6 years)
HECoS Code	100319
Start date of programme	Pre 2003/4
Date of programme approval	Pre 2003/4
Date of last programme amendment approval	November 2024
Valid for academic year and cohorts	2025-26
Programme Director	Ana Parejo Vadillo
Date of last revision to document	06/06/2025

Admissions requirements

We welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential.

UCAS tariff: 112 points (48 for Foundation Year entry)

The UCAS tariff score is applicable to you if you have recently studied a qualification that has a UCAS tariff equivalence. UCAS provides a [tariff calculator](#) for you to work out what your qualification is worth within the UCAS tariff.

Course aims

Are you fascinated by literature and its cultural and political contexts? Our BA English offers you the chance to study the full range of English literature, and to develop valuable new skills in writing, reading and critical thinking.

You'll gain a detailed knowledge of literary works from the medieval period to the present day and discover authors from a variety of places and cultures.

Based in our historic campus in the heart of London, this course offers both depth and breadth through its diverse range of modules.

Foundational modules in Year 1 introduce you to key techniques in literary analysis, and show how theoretical approaches such as feminism, post-colonialism and psychoanalysis can transform the ways in which you read and think. You can then choose from a range of option modules that allow you to focus on single authors, genres and literary periods.

You'll read texts by writers such as Dickens, Zadie Smith, Shakespeare and Plath, encounter genres such as science fiction and romance, and explore literary forms from the novel to comics and beyond. The course's flexible structure allows you to shape your degree according to your own literary and critical interests.

BA English aims to:

- Provide a stimulating introduction to English as taught at Birkbeck in the School of Arts.
- Provide progression from foundation year level to MA study in English and related subjects at Birkbeck.
- Provide a broad and balanced degree programme enabling students to engage imaginatively in the reading and analysing of literary texts from all periods from the early medieval period to the present.
- Enhance students' abilities in critical thinking, enabling them to develop independent critical judgement.
- Develop students' knowledge of a range of textual forms (including poetry, drama, novels, short stories, graphic novels) and genres (such as tragedy, comedy, the gothic, science fiction, romance, life-writing).
- Develop students' knowledge and understanding of a diverse range of critical theories, such that they are able to enter into critical debate and make their own use of various methodological approaches.
- Enhance students' ability to write lucid, logical and well-structured prose, enabling them to write on the subject matter of their modules at progressively extended length, in a range of academic, and, as appropriate, creative, genres.
- Develop students' understanding of the ways literature responds to and helps shape its social and political contexts, exploring issues such as race, gender, sexuality, class, disability, and environmental politics.

- Provide students with a broad and balanced understanding of the practices of academic reading, research and writing.
- Enable students to develop skills in editing and revising their own writing.
- Enable students to consolidate learning through lecturer/peer feedback.
- Produce well-rounded graduates ready to make a contribution to the professional environment across a range of relevant sectors (arts and culture, education, charity, law, the civil service), or to progress to postgraduate studies.

Distinctive Features:

- The compulsory modules that make up half the degree programme provide students with a strong foundation in key literary concepts and skills, explored from diverse perspectives and energising modes of study.
- The second half of the degree enables students to develop their own specialist interests with research-led option modules delivered by a department ranked 2nd in the country in the Research Excellence Framework.
- Students are supported by a Personal Tutor throughout the course, providing individual consultation to help address specific skills development, offer academic consultation when choosing options and dissertation topics, and provide a familiar point of contact for pastoral issues.
- Students benefit from a range of written and verbal feedback on their work, tailored to help them improve their skills, knowledge and understanding throughout the course.
- Students can apply to take part in a competitive Industry Placement module where they spend a term working in an arts-related organisation or arts-related role.
- Employers highly value the analytical, critical and communication skills an English degree provides.
- The degree also provides ideal preparation for postgraduate study.
 - The wide option choice allows students to pursue their interests, either across different subjects or, if they wish, by focusing on more specific areas.
 - Students are offered detailed academic advice, as close as possible to a 'tailor-made' approach in which consultation with an academic tutor enables students to balance the acquisition and development of skills in methods against more content-based and disciplinary emphasis leading to an end-designated award.
 - Students can apply to take part in a competitive Industry Placement module where they spend a term working in an arts-related organisation or arts-related role.
 - Employers highly value the analytical, critical and communication skills a Liberal Arts degree provides.
 - The degree also provides ideal preparation for postgraduate study, offering entry to a number of MA specialisms.

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time – 3 years					
Year 1					
4	AREN256S4	Storytelling	30	Compulsory	T1-2
4	AREN257S4	Production of the Human	30	Compulsory	T1
4	ENHU00754	Writing London	30	Compulsory	T2-3
4	SC04034S4	Rewriting Our World	30	Compulsory	T3
Year 2					
5	EHNU009S5	The Novel	30	Compulsory	T1-2
5	ENHU003S5	Medieval and Renaissance Literatures	30	Compulsory	T2
5	AREN126S5	Connecting the Arts	30	Compulsory	T1
5		Option from range of approved modules within field in T3	30	Option	T3
Year 3					
6	SC04033S6	Dissertation BA English and Liberal Arts	30	Compulsory	T1--3
6		Option from range of approved modules within field (at least one in T1)	30	Option	T1, T2
6		Option from range of approved modules within field (at least one in T2)	30	Option	T1, T2
6		Option from range of approved modules within field	30	Option	T1, T2
Part-time – 4 years					
Year 1					
4	AREN256S4	Storytelling	30	Compulsory	T1-2
4	AREN257S4	Production of the Human	30	Compulsory	T1
4	ENHU00754	Writing London	30	Compulsory	T2-3
Year 2					
5	EHNU009S5	The Novel	30	Compulsory	T1-2
5	ENHU003S5	Medieval and Renaissance Literatures	30	Compulsory	T1
4	SC04034S4	Rewriting Our World	30	Compulsory	T3
Year 3					
5	AREN126S5	Connecting the Arts	30	Compulsory	T1
5		L5 Option from range of approved modules within field	30	Option	T2 or T3

6		L6 Option from range of approved modules within field (one of the options to be chosen in each term)	30	Option	T2 or T3
Year 4					
6	SC04033S6	Dissertation BA English and Liberal Arts	30	Compulsory	T1-2-3
6		Option from range of approved modules within field. (At least one in T1)	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
6		Option from range of approved modules within field. (At least one in T2)	30*	Option	T1, 2 or 3

Core: Module must be taken and passed by student

Compulsory: Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)

Option: Student can choose to take this module

BA English students must take at least 90 credits at Level 5 and then again at Level 6 from modules within the school's English, Theatre and Creative Writing subject area.

Indicative BA English options

(30 credits unless otherwise stated)

Level 5

SC04008S5 Writing in the Workplace (T2)
 AREN126S5, Connecting the Arts (T1)
 ENHU001S5 Our Theatrical World (T1)
 AREN198S5 , Art for Social Change (T2)
 AREN199S5, The Arts of Adaptation: Creative Climates (T2)
 AREN100S5 Creative non-fiction (T2)
 AREN157S5 Tragedy (T3)
 AREN163S5 Telling the Self (T2)
 ENHU004S5 Literature, Empire and Race (T3)
 AREN247S5, European Drama

Level 6

AREN139S6 Fiction Workshop: The Contemporary Novel (T2)
 AREN193S6 Science Fiction (T2)
 AREN213S6 Shakespeare (T2)
 AREN221S6 The Creative Critical Seam (T1)
 AREN299H6 Literature and the Politics of Feelings(T2, 15 credits)
 AREN300H6 Gothic Romance 1764-present (T1, 15 credits)
 ENHU049S6 Fin-De-Siecle (T1)

Note: The foundation year modules are the Arts Foundation year – please see separate specification

How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your

learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Your learning will be organised around the activities outlined below.

Teaching on the programme is varied. Modules at Levels 4 and 5 are typically taught by lectures, seminars, and workshops. Modules at Level 6 are usually taught in seminar groups as well as through individual supervision sessions for the Dissertation. Some modules include one-to-one tutorials by arrangement (for example to discuss essay feedback). You may also encounter other forms of teaching - e.g. language work – depending on the options you choose.

Lectures are designed to provide you with an outline or overview of the topic, to engage you with the material and direct you to other resources. They are a springboard for your own learning. Seminars are group sessions where you will be asked to contribute to discussion or group work around the topic, with material set in advance for which you need to prepare. Workshops based on more hands-on exercises that allow you practice skills such as close reading and critical analysis.

Other important modes of learning include: note-taking, textual analysis, private study, library and archival research, use of internet sources, as well completion of the assessed work.

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. We use a variety of assessment methods. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will be through the following types of assessment.

Assessment methods used include commentaries, essays, take-home examinations and an independent final year dissertation, as well as a wide range of exercises designed to evaluate different abilities and prepare students to the range of genres, lengths, and writing skills required in the twenty-first-century workplace.

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

At the end of the BA English course, you should be able to:

- Have a wider and deeper knowledge of English literature.
- Recognize, discuss, and write about forms and genres of literary text.
- Write analytically.
- Have knowledge of current and recent critical theories relevant to the study of literature and apply them as critical tools.
- Demonstrate critical skills in the close reading and analysis of literary texts
- Choose appropriate subjects and write about them, as well as to edit, develop, and extend an analytical (and as appropriate creative) piece of work.

- Demonstrate research skills, including the ability to gather, sift and organise material independently and critically and to present it in the form of an essay, report, presentation or creative piece.
- Have gained skills of self-evaluation enabling you to reflect on your own practice.
- Demonstrate bibliographical skills, including accurate citation of sources and consistent use of conventions in the presentation of scholarly work.
- Think critically and independently.

Careers and further study

Employers highly value the analytical, critical and communication skills of a Birkbeck English or Liberal Arts degree. You can find our graduates in a wide range of roles in the creative industries, as well as, in education, law, the civil service and business roles. English and Liberal Arts graduates leave with valuable attributes such as:

- High-level oral and written communication skills in English
- Research skills
- Skills in evaluating and assessing various types of information
- The ability to convey your ideas and build an argument
- The ability to analyse and process complex ideas
- Independent research skills as well as the ability to work as part of a team

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website](#).

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services](#). This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives

to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

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