

Programme Specification

1	Awarding body	University of London
2	Teaching Institution	Birkbeck College
3	Programme Title(s)	BA Creative Writing and English/ BA Creative Writing and English with Foundation Year
4	Programme Code(s)	UUBACWEN_C (full-time 3 years) UBACWREN_C (part-time 4 years) UUBFCWRT_C (full-time with Foundation Year 4 years) UUBFCWEN_C (part-time with Foundation Year 6 years)
5	UCAS code (if applicable)	4J93/4J94 (with Foundation Year)
6	Home Department	English, Theatre and Creative Writing
7	Exit Award(s)	Bachelor of Arts
8	Duration of Study (number of years)	3 years or 4 years or 6 years
9	Mode of Study	Full time, Part time
10	Level of Award (FHEQ)	6

11	Other teaching depts or institution	N/A
12	Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details	N/A <i>(include URL to PSRB)</i>
13	QAA Benchmark Group	English – Creative Writing

14	Programme Rationale & Aims
	<p>(For Foundation Year (year zero), see School of Arts Foundation Year programme specification)</p> <p>The joint degree offers students the core of the Creative Writing programme in areas of prose fiction, poetry, and playwriting, and allows the student to take critical subjects in analogous English Literature modules. The emphasis of the joint degree is less on the vocational aspects of writing and its related industries; it is geared more to the traditional academic student, limiting the necessity for the student to engage in publishing projects, learn editorial skills, and take screenwriting courses, and giving a focus on literary critical modules.</p> <p>This degree will combine many of the main aims and distinctive features of both the BA English and the BA Creative Writing.</p> <p>Main Aims This programme will:</p>

- Offer literature and creative writing courses that offer face-to-face teaching to part-time and full-time mature students by teachers from a School rated 5* in research and 'excellent' in teaching.
- Enable students to develop their skills as writers of fiction, poetry, and drama with published specialists.
- Offer a curriculum that combines breadth of module provision and flexibility of choice.
- Deepen students' awareness of form and elements of the writer's craft.
- Develop students' skills of self-evaluation and constructive analysis of their own work and the work of others.
- Provide students with a broad and balanced understanding of the practices of reading and researching through literary theory and creative writing.
- Offer a balanced degree programme enabling students to engage imaginatively in the reading and analysing of literary texts from all periods from Anglo-Saxon to the present; to develop independent critical judgement; and to write lucid, logical and well-structured prose while also developing their own creative work.
- Offer students the opportunity to undertake and complete a long-term creative and critical writing project.
- Enable students to develop skills in editing and revising their own critical and creative writing.
- Enable students to engage imaginatively in the analysis and interpretation of texts as well as develop their own practices as writers.
- Develop students' independent critical judgement, helping them attain understanding of the histories, conventions, and processes of various writing genres, and to present lucid, logical, and well-structured work.
- Produce well-rounded students capable of independently evaluating and engaging creatively and critically with the current literary scene

Distinctive Features

- This is a fully integrated JH degree with modules at level four and at level six which have been developed by creative and critical writers.
- It offers face-to-face teaching to full-time students by published writers—active practitioners in their respective fields—and by guest lecturers (established authors) and publishing industry professionals.
- The expansive, multi-disciplinary approach to the study of writing (fiction, poetry, drama, screenwriting, creative non-fiction) with a choice of optional elective modules from the wider School of Arts.
- The opportunity for students to specialise in a specific writing discipline and develop a sustained writing project, the intensity of which prepares them for the expectations of an MA or MFA programme.
- Students on the course will also be eligible to submit work to the *The Mechanics' Institute Review*, compiled annually by students on the MA in Creative Writing.
- Students are predominantly taught in small, interactive workshop groups, alongside plenary lectures.
- Full-time, evening, face-to-face study.

15	<p>Entry Criteria</p> <p>For Foundation Year (year zero), see Foundation Year programme specification.</p> <p>The standard entry requirement is 120 UCAS points or equivalent, although we may waive these formal entry requirements and make our own assessment of your skills and knowledge. Some applicants may also be invited to complete a written literature task. The UCAS tariff score is applicable if a student has recently studied a qualification that has a UCAS tariff equivalence.</p> <p>Some applicants may also be invited to complete a written literature task.</p> <p>FOUNDATION YEAR DEGREES You can progress onto the BA Creative Writing if you successfully complete the foundation year of our course. This is an ideal route onto an undergraduate degree if you are returning to study after a gap, or if you have not previously studied this subject, or if you didn't achieve the grades you need for a place on this degree.</p> <p>INTERNATIONAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS If English is not your first language or you have not previously studied in English, our usual requirement is the equivalent of an International English Language Testing System (IELTS Academic Test) score of 6.5, with not less than 6.0 in each of the sub-tests.</p> <p>If you don't meet the minimum IELTS requirement, we offer pre-sessional English courses, foundation programmes and language support services to help you improve your English language skills and get your place at Birkbeck.</p>
16	<p>Learning Outcomes</p> <p>SUBJECT SPECIFIC: Graduates of BA Creative Writing and English will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have gained a wider and deeper knowledge of English literature. 2. Demonstrate control of elements of the creative writer's craft in their own work. 3. Have developed the ability to write analytically. 4. Have learned to recognize, discuss, and write about forms and genres of literary text. 5. Use language more confidently, precisely, and imaginatively. 6. Be acquainted with current and recent critical theories relevant to the study of literature and learned to apply them as critical tools. 7. Maintain a regular writing habit and produce more effective creative work independently. 8. Be able to discuss and evaluate the work of fellow students and established writers in relation to elements of the writer's craft. 9. Have gained critical skills in the close reading and analysis of literary texts. 10. Be able to implement the practices of redrafting and editing.

11. Have gained the ability to choose appropriate subjects and to write about them, as well as the ability to edit, develop, and extend an analytical creative piece of work.
12. Have developed 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
13. Be able to experiment with style and form.
14. Have gained skills of self-evaluation enabling them to reflect on their own practice.
15. Utilise critical skills in the close reading and analysis of creative texts.
16. Have gained bibliographical skills including accurate citation of sources and consistent use of conventions in the presentation of scholarly work.
17. Have produced a viable extended writing project and/or creative work in consultation with a supervisor.
18. Have gained intellectual independence: this involves the ability to gather, sift, select, organise, and synthesise evidence and subject matter; the ability to choose appropriate subjects and to write about them, as well as the ability to edit, develop, and extend a piece of creative or critical work.

INTELLECTUAL:

By the end of the course, students will gain:

1. Knowledge and understanding of the various forms and genres of creative and critical writing and the different techniques and processes they employ.
2. Greater confidence and fluency in their own writing.
3. Intellectual independence: this involves the ability to gather, sift, select, organise, and synthesise evidence and subject matter; the ability to choose appropriate subjects and to write about them, as well as the ability to edit, develop, and extend a piece of work.
4. Analytical ability, and the capacity to consider and solve complex problems orally, verbally, and in practice.
5. Skills in researching relevant fields of knowledge and developing drafts of their work.
6. An understanding of sources of inspiration and creativity.
7. An awareness of how to solve craft-related problems in their creative work.
8. The ability to reflect on their own writing process and the processes of other writers.
9. Skills of interpretation, self-evaluation, and the communication of constructive feedback.
10. Confidence and skill in sustaining and developing creative projects.
11. Knowledge and understanding of contemporary writers and writing.
12. A critical understanding of the context of their own work.
13. An awareness of the contemporary marketplace and its relationship to creative writing.
14. An awareness of the industry-standard expectations for the presentation of their creative work.
15. Bibliographical skills appropriate to the discipline, including accurate citation of sources and consistent use of conventions in the presentation of scholarly work.
16. The ability to think critically and independently about works they have written and read.

	<p>PRACTICAL: By the end of the course, students will gain:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A portfolio of creative work (with which the student can pursue publication or entrance onto higher-level creative writing programmes, such as the MA Creative Writing at Birkbeck). 2. The ability to recognise and employ the skills necessary to complete assignments. 3. The ability to follow a coherent pathway of study. 4. The ability to sustain and evaluate creative projects. 5. Creative and critical writing skills, including the ability to edit and revise, to apply technique and critical analysis to the development of a piece of work in one or more genres. 6. 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, dissertation, presentation or written creative piece. 7. The ability to present ideas and arguments in a variety of modes: visually, orally, verbally, reflectively, in practice, in groups, in writing. 8. The ability to work efficiently and constructively within a group to critique work. 9. The ability to manage time in the production of written work or group work to a specific length. 10. Relevant IT skills; the use of libraries and electronic sources of information, online discussion groups, web-based research. <p>PERSONAL AND SOCIAL: By the end of the course, students will gain:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A richer knowledge of the field of creative and critical writing, and an informed critical and creative approach to the subject area. 2. The ability to act as a reflective, self-directed learner, recognizing and employing a range of strategies to support independent learning, including an awareness of strengths/weaknesses. 3. The ability to respond more effectively to the work of others; to participate in workshop or small group discussion by listening and contributing ideas in a sensitive and informed manner. 4. The ability to accept and evaluate constructive criticism on their own work; to participate in workshop or small group discussion by listening to feedback of fellow students and lecturers. 5. The ability to communicate in public and in working groups with expressive clarity and sophistication. 6. Interpersonal skills, such as the ability to work as a member and a leader of a team. 7. Appropriate library and electronic researching skills.
17	<p>Learning, teaching and assessment methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modules at Levels 4 and 5 are taught by lectures and seminars. • Modules at Level 6 are usually taught in seminar and/or workshop groups. • Assessment on Creative Writing modules is 100% coursework.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment on English literature modules includes essays and examinations, as well as a range of exercises designed to evaluate different abilities and prepare students for more concentrated forms of academic writing. • A creative and critical dissertation is also a compulsory requirement of both the full-time and part-time BA Creative Writing and English in the final year. <p>Teaching is varied and interactive, and takes the form of lecturer-led sessions on elements of craft, workshopping of students' creative work, class and home exercises, student readings, individual and group work. It also includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plenary lectures to year groups to allow for general exposition of craft elements or critical approaches to literature and instruction therein, as well as to disseminate course-related information and to foster a sense of community amongst students. • Branch-off workshops and seminars following lectures, encouraging student participation in general discussion and the use of weekly student presentations. This encourages development of communication skills in small groups and promotes exploration of material presented in the lecture. • One-to-one tutorials by arrangement, particularly when students are preparing and receiving feedback on essays; one-to-one supervision of final year research project. • Opportunity to submit work to <i>The Mechanics' Institute Review</i>, produced annually by students on the MA Creative Writing. <p>Other important modes of learning include: note-taking, visual and textual analysis; private study; group projects; library research; use of internet sources; use of museums and galleries; writing assignments, including essays, creative work, research essays and projects.</p>
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18	<p>Programme Description</p> <p>For Foundation Year (year zero), see Foundation Year programme specification.</p> <p>YEAR 1 – The four 15 credit Level 4 Creative Writing modules taken by all students are designed to introduce them to the basic elements of craft in the writing of prose fiction, drama, poetry and screen writing. This will be balanced by an English Literature module in Reading Literature which develops student ability in 'close reading', sometimes called 'close textual analysis'. Students will also take 'Storytelling: Narrative Archetypes, Forms and Techniques', a Level 4 cross-departmental module (2020-21) which integrates creative writing pedagogy with learning strategies taken from English studies. In addition to this, all students must take the 0 weighted module 'Doing English', which will help students gain and practice the skills they need to study English successfully at university.</p> <p>YEAR 2 – The Level 5 compulsory Creative Writing module is Narrative Methods, which focuses on developing the student's longer form fiction and non-fiction. This is complemented by the compulsory literature module, The Novel, which develops critical skills with a concentration on critically evaluating longer form fiction. The joint honours degree also allows students to choose (with the permission of the Programme Director) from modules on related programmes in the School of Arts (e.g. BA Arts and Humanities).</p>
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Year of entry: 2021/22

<p>Year 3 – All joint honours students must take the Level Six compulsory Module, the Creative Critical Seam. All other modules and half-modules (most of them at level 6) are optional, chosen from a range offered annually by the BA English programme and the BA Creative Writing programme. The joint honours degree also allows students to choose from modules on related programmes in the School of Arts (e.g. BA Arts and Humanities). In the final year, students will choose to undertake a dissertation in English Literature (a long essay on a subject of their own choice) or a dissertation in creative writing (in a form and subject of their choice) or a dissertation which incorporates creative as well as critical writing (in the form of a preface).</p>
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19	Programme Structure			
Full Time programme				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	AREN256S4	Storytelling: Narrative Archetypes, Forms and Techniques	30	Core
4	AREN219H4	Introduction to Poetry	15	Core
4	AREN220H4	Introduction to Drama	15	Core
4	AREN203H4	Introduction to Screenwriting	15	Core
4	AREN004H4	Independent Reading Portfolio: The Short Story	15	Core
	ENHU006S4	Reading Literature	30	Core
4	AREN208Z4	Doing English	0	Core
Year 2				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
5	AREN005S5	Narrative Methods	30	Core
5	ENHU009S5	The Novel	30	Comp
5	Various	Option from range of approved modules within English Literature	30	Optional
5	Various	Option from range of approved modules within Creative Writing (either Playwriting or Poetry)	30	Optional
Year 3				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
6	AREN267S6 Or ENHU051S6 Or AREN171S6	BA Dissertation in Creative Writing and English Or Dissertation BA English Or Dissertation BA Creative Writing	30	Comp
6	AREN221S6	The Creative Critical Seam	30	Comp
6	Various	Option from range of approved modules within English Literature or School of Arts	30	Optional
6	Various	Option from range of approved modules within Creative Writing or School of Arts	30	Optional

Year of entry: 2021/22

Part Time programme				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	AREN256S4	Storytelling: Narrative Archetypes, Forms and Techniques	30	Core
4	ENHU006S4	Reading Literature	30	Core
4	AREN004H4	Independent Reading Portfolio: The Short Story	15	Core
4	AREN203H4	Introduction to Screen Writing	15	Core
4	AREN208Z4	Doing English	0	Core
Year 2				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
5	AREN005S5	Narrative Methods	30	Core
5	ENHU009S5	The Novel	30	Comp
4	AREN219H4	Introduction to Poetry	15	Core
4	AREN220H4	Introduction to Drama	15	Core
Year 3				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
6	AREN221S6	The Creative Critical Seam	30	Comp
5	Various	Option from range of approved modules within English Literature	30	Optional
5	Various	Option from range of approved modules within Creative Writing (either Scriptwriting or Poetry)	30	Optional
Year 4				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
6	Various	Optional Module from English Literature or School of Arts.	30	Optional
6	Various	Option from range of approved modules within Creative Writing or School of Arts	30	Optional
6	AREN267S6 Or ENHU051S6 Or AREN171S6	BA Dissertation in Creative Writing and English Or Dissertation BA English Or Dissertation BA Creative Writing	30	Comp

Status*

CORE – Module must be taken and passed by student; COMPULSORY – Module must be taken, mark can be reviewed at sub-exam board; OPTIONAL – Student can choose to take this module

20	Programme Director	Dr Stephen Willey
21	Start Date (term/year)	Autumn 2015
22	Date approved by TQEC	Spring 2015
23	Date approved by Academic Board	Spring 2015
24	Date(s) updated/amended	March 2021 (for 2021/22)