

### Programme Specification

1	<b>Awarding body</b>	University of London
2	<b>Teaching Institution</b>	<b>Birkbeck College</b>
3	<b>Programme Title(s)</b>	<b>BA Creative Writing</b> <b>BA Creative Writing with Foundation Year</b>
4	<b>Programme Code(s)</b>	UUBACWRT_C (full-time 3 years) UBACWRT_C (part-time 4 years) UUBFCWRT_C (full-time with Foundation Year 4 years) UBFCWRIT_C (part-time with Foundation Year 6 years)
5	<b>UCAS code</b>	W800; W801 (with Foundation Year)
6	<b>Home Department</b>	English, Theatre and Creative Writing
7	<b>Exit Award(s)</b>	Dip HE, Cert HE
8	<b>Duration of Study (number of years)</b>	3 years or 4 years or 6 years
9	<b>Mode of Study</b>	Full time, Part time
10	<b>Level of Award (FHEQ)</b>	6
11	<b>Other teaching depts or institution</b>	N/A
12	<b>Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details</b>	N/A
13	<b><a href="#">QAA Benchmark Statement</a></b>	English – Creative Writing

14	<b>Programme Rationale &amp; Aims</b>
	<p><b>For Foundation Year (year zero), see Foundation Year programme specification.</b></p> <p><b>Main Aims:</b> The full-time BA Creative Writing is an extension of the successful part-time programme that has been running at Birkbeck since 2010. It has been introduced in light of the high enrolment numbers on the full-time joint honours BA Creative Writing &amp; English programme, which was introduced in 2015.</p> <p>The proposed structure of the full-time BA Creative Writing reflects minimal changes to the existing programme of study; in this way, we can cater intuitively and unobtrusively for our current part-time and joint honours students, while also incorporating a new cohort of full-timers.</p> <p>The programme aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a cogent full-time progression route from undergraduate study to postgraduate study in creative writing at Birkbeck.</li> <li>• Enable students to develop their skills as writers of fiction, poetry, drama, screenwriting and creative non-fiction.</li> <li>• Deepen students' awareness of form and elements of the writer's craft.</li> </ul>

- 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 as a writer.
- Enable students to undertake and complete a long-term creative writing project.
- Enable students to develop skills in editing and revising their own writing.
- Provide students with a contextual understanding of the publishing, performance, and broadcast industries.
- Provide students with opportunities to interact regularly with fellow writers and industry professionals.
- Enable students to consolidate learning through lecturer/peer feedback.
- 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 judgment, 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:**

- It is the only centrally located single honours BA (Hons) Creative Writing in London and one of the few currently offered in the UK.
- It capitalises upon the success and reputation of the existing part-time degree and the MA Creative Writing.
- 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.
- Synergy of learning: the unique opportunity for students to develop their skills as writers while deepening their understanding of the demands and expectations of writing as a career. Students will study and interact with guest speakers from the creative industries—editors, literary agents, publishers, theatre practitioners as well as established writers across all genres.
- 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.
- The opportunity for students to engage in a stimulating publishing project in their final year. Students will have the opportunity to organise and host a literary event, featuring readings from student work.
- 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><b>Entry Criteria</b></p> <p>For Foundation Year (year zero), see Foundation Year programme specification.</p> <p>The entry requirement is 112-128 UCAS points or equivalent, although we may waive these formal entry requirements and make our own assessment of an applicant’s skills and knowledge.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>For mature applicants who have not recently studied qualification with a UCAS tariff, admission is based on submission of 1,000 words of creative writing and an interview.</p> <p>All applicants, whatever their academic background, must submit a sample of 1,000 words of creative writing (fiction, non-fiction, poetry, drama, or screenwriting).</p> <p><b>FOUNDATION YEAR DEGREES</b></p> <p>Students can progress onto the BA Creative Writing if they successfully complete the foundation year of our course. This is an ideal route onto an undergraduate degree if students are returning to study after a gap, or if they have not previously studied this subject, or did not achieve the grades needed for a place on this degree.</p>
16	<p><b>Learning Outcomes</b></p> <p>For Foundation Year (year zero), see Foundation Year programme specification.</p> <p><b>SUBJECT SPECIFIC:</b></p> <p>By the end of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate control of elements of the writer’s craft in their own work.</li> <li>2. Use language more confidently, precisely, and imaginatively.</li> <li>3. Maintain a regular writing habit and produce more effective creative work independently.</li> <li>4. Discuss and evaluate the work of fellow students and established writers in relation to elements of craft.</li> <li>5. Implement the practices of redrafting and editing.</li> <li>6. Experiment with style and form.</li> <li>7. Utilise critical skills in the close reading and analysis of creative texts.</li> <li>8. Produce a viable extended creative writing project in consultation with a supervisor.</li> <li>9. Understand the inherent processes and key roles within the publishing, performance, and broadcast industries.</li> </ol> <p><b>INTELLECTUAL:</b></p> <p>By the end of the course, students will gain:</p>

1. Knowledge and understanding of the various forms and genres of creative 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.

**PRACTICAL:**

By the end of the course, students will gain:

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 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.

	<p>10. Relevant IT skills; the use of libraries and electronic sources of information, online discussion groups, web-based research.</p> <p><b>PERSONAL AND SOCIAL:</b> By the end of the course, students will gain:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A richer knowledge of the field of creative writing, and an informed critical and creative approach to the subject area.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>5. The ability to communicate in public and in working groups with expressive clarity and sophistication.</li> <li>6. Interpersonal skills, such as the ability to work as a member and a leader of a team.</li> <li>7. Appropriate library and electronic researching skills.</li> </ol>
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17	<p><b>Learning, teaching and assessment methods</b></p> <p>Assessment for creative writing modules is 100% coursework. However, an optional School of Arts module in Year Two (Full-time) or Year 3 (Part-Time) may include an examination or another form of assessment.</p> <p>A creative dissertation is also a compulsory requirement of both the full-time and part-time BA Creative Writing in the final year.</p> <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"> <li>• Plenary lectures to year groups to allow for general exposition of craft elements and instruction therein, as well as to disseminate course-related information and to foster a sense of community amongst students.</li> <li>• Branch-off workshops 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• The Independent Reading Portfolio module develops self-reflective and research skills and further enables the ability to evaluate and synthesise material across the degree programme.</li> <li>• Visiting speakers—other writers and publishing professionals.</li> <li>• Opportunity to submit work to and/or take part in the BA Creative Writing launch event curated annually by final-year students on the degree.</li> </ul>
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Year of entry: 2021/22

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunity to submit work to <i>The Mechanics' Institute Review</i>, produced annually by students on the MA Creative Writing.</li> </ul> <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	<b>Programme Structure</b>
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	<p><b>For Foundation Year (year zero), see School of Arts Foundation Year programme specification.</b></p> <p><b>Description</b></p> <p>The BA Creative Writing is a unique and exciting programme of study that gives students the opportunity to explore a range of disciplines, from prose fiction to poetry, scriptwriting to creative non-fiction. Under the tutelage of practising published writers, students not only build an understanding of the craft of writing and hone your authorial technique, but also learn the vital instinct for reading as a writer. Through practical projects and engagement with visiting professionals, students can broaden their understanding of the many aspects of the writing industry. They also complete an extended creative project in a specific genre in the final year. The degree provides students with a basis of skills necessary to pursue writing as a profession. It also equips Them with expertise transferable to many careers in the arts, education, and the media.</p> <p>Students take 360 credits to gain the degree, as shown in the programme structures below.</p>
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**Full Time programme – 3 years**

**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
5	AREN038H5	The Life of the Writer	15	Core
5	AREN037H5	Independent Reading Portfolio: Genres	15	Core

**Year 2**

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
5	AREN005S5	Narrative Methods	30	Core
5	AREN100S5	Creative Non-Fiction	30	Compulsory
5	AREN141H5	The Writing Industry	15	Compulsory
5	AREN204S5	Scriptwriting Workshop 1: The Essentials of Stage & Screen <b>OR</b>	30	Option
5	AREN041S5	Poetry Workshop 1	30	Option
5	AREN144H5	Independent Reading Portfolio: The Written World	15	Compulsory

Year of entry: 2021/22



<b>Year 3</b>				
6	AREN182H6	Publishing Project	15	Core
		<b>Two 30 credit options from the following:</b>	60	Options
6	AREN143S6	Poetry Workshop 2: The Open Page	30	Option
6	AREN139S6	Fiction Workshop: The Contemporary Novel	30	Option
6	AREN179S6	Scriptwriting Workshop 2: Writing for the Contemporary Stage	30	Option
6	AREN205S6	Scriptwriting Workshop 4: The Television Drama	30	Option
6	AREN221S6	The Creative Critical Seam	30	Option
6	AREN181H6	Independent Reading Portfolio: Critical Reflection	15	Core
6	AREN171S6	Dissertation BA Creative Writing	30	Core
<b>Part Time programme – 4 years</b>				
<b>Year 1</b>				
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
<b>Year 2</b>				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
5	AREN005S5	Narrative Methods	30	Core
5	AREN038H5	The Life of the Writer	15	Core
5	AREN204S5	Scriptwriting Workshop 1: The Essentials of Stage & Screen	30	Option
5	AREN041S5	Poetry Workshop 1	30	Option
5	AREN037H5	Independent Reading Portfolio: Genres	15	Core
<b>Year 3</b>				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
5	AREN141H5	The Writing Industry	15	Compulsory
5	AREN144H5	Independent Reading Portfolio: The Written World	15	Compulsory
5	AREN100S5	Creative Non-Fiction	30	Compulsory
6		<b>A 30-credit option from the following list:</b>	30	Option
6	AREN143S6	Poetry Workshop 2: The Open Page	30	Option
6	AREN139S6	Fiction Workshop: The Contemporary Novel	30	Option
6	AREN179S6	Scriptwriting Workshop 2: Writing for the Contemporary Stage	30	Option
6	AREN205S6	Scriptwriting Workshop 4: The Television Drama	30	Option
6	AREN221S6	The Creative Critical Seam	30	Option

Year of entry: 2021/22



<b>Year 4</b>				
<b>Level</b>	<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Status*</b>
6	AREN171S6	Dissertation BA Creative Writing	30	Core
6	AREN181H6	Independent Reading Portfolio: Critical Reflection	15	Core
6	AREN182H6	Publishing Project	15	Core
6		<b>A 30-credit option from the following list</b>	30	Option
6	AREN143S6	Poetry Workshop 2: The Open Page	30	Option
6	AREN139S6	Fiction Workshop: The Contemporary Novel	30	Option
6	AREN179S6	Scriptwriting Workshop 2: Writing for the Contemporary Stage	30	Option
6	AREN205S6	Scriptwriting Workshop 4: The Television Drama	30	Option
6	AREN221S6	The Creative Critical Seam	30	Option

**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*

19	<b>Programme Director</b>	Dr Richard Hamblyn
20	<b>Start Date</b> <i>(term/year)</i>	Autumn 2010
21	<b>Date approved by TQEC</b>	Summer 2009
22	<b>Date approved by Academic Board</b>	Summer 2009
23	<b>Date(s) updated/amended</b>	May 2020