

# CORE MODULES: BA (Hons) English Literature

You must take modules worth 120 credits at each level of the course. Each module is worth a specified number of credits.

## Year one for full-time students (Level 4)

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### A History of English Literature from the Present to 1789 (15 credits)

- *This chronological approach to a history of English Literature reverses the usual format of starting with Beowulf and ending up at the present and instead starts with the familiar and ends with the earliest literature. This form has been chosen so that students start with texts from the period with which they are familiar, before gradually going back through literary history.*

### A History of English Literature from Equiano to Chaucer (15 credits)

- *We explore an outline of the history of English Literature from the end of the eighteenth century to the Anglo-Saxon period, using a selection of texts taken from volume 1 of The Norton Anthology of English Literature, to give you examples of different literary forms belonging to every period of English literary history prior to the Romantic movement. The juxtaposition of pieces by well-known authors such as Chaucer, Marlowe, and Milton with less familiar texts is intended to encourage reflection upon what constitutes the 'canon'.*

### Introduction to Imaginative Writing: Prose Fiction (15 credits)

- *Introducing students to the principles of writing prose fiction, you will read sample texts each week, and work with those texts with a view to understanding how writers have managed particular aspects of their fiction such as: openings, narrative arc, characterisation, dialogue, setting and place, and point of view. The module not only provides an environment for creative writing, but teaches skills such as reading as a writer, and reflection and evaluation of creative practice.*

### Introduction to Imaginative Writing: Poems and Stage Writing (15 credits)

- *The module introduces students to the techniques of writing poetry and writing for the stage, reading a selection of poetry or scenes from a play each week, and working with the texts to understand, poetic form, the practicalities of writing for the stage, etc.*

### Gods and Heroes (15 credits)

- *This module will introduce you to some of the key classical and Biblical texts which underpin English Literature and which have been translated and adapted by each new generation of writers. You will gain an understanding of creation narratives, the epic, Greek tragedy and key episodes from the Bible. You will consider the different ways in which writers have depicted heroic adventures, human suffering, inner conflict and the struggles between humanity and the gods.*

### Myth and Magic (15 credits)

- *Myth and Magic will build on your experience of reading influential classical texts in translation in Gods and Heroes. Its focus will be tales of magic and transformation, and the ways in which such narratives have been adapted and alluded to in English literature, influencing fairy tales and science fiction as well as more canonical literary traditions. A key text for this module is Ovid's Metamorphoses, one of the landmarks of Western literature and the most familiar source for many well-known mythical narratives.*

### Reading Literature and Theory (15 credits)

- *This foundational module introduces you to an exciting range of social, cultural and political theories that can be used to further the analysis of literary texts. Selected theories might include psychoanalysis, Marxism, structuralism, feminism, post-colonialism, postmodernism or queer theory.*

## Writing Matters (15 credits)

- *Writing Matters will introduce you to the key skills of close reading, academic writing and critical analysis necessary for a degree in English Literature. The fundamental tenet of the module is that writing is a process composed of a number of stages. Each seminar will focus on a practical element of literary study such as how to undertake appropriate research, how to take notes, how to plan an essay, how to compose and structure an argument, how to write a grammatically correct sentence, and how to write a bibliography. You will undertake writing activities within each seminar to practice these skills whilst considering the role of literature and literacy in society.*

## Year two for full-time students (Level 5)

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### Special Topic 1: Modernism and the City (15 credits)

- *This course focuses on literary Modernism from the 1900s to the 1930s. It explores the ways in which the distinctive features of modernist writing – subjectivity, the psychological, innovations in form, style and genre – are produced by urban experience. Ideas of exile and expatriation will underlie discussion of the cultural exchanges occurring in London, Paris and New York.*

### Postcolonial Writing (15 credits)

- *Much of the most exciting and provocative writing of the last century has emerged from regions of the world that were formerly colonised. This module offers you a selective survey of postcolonial writing and theory, using an expansive conception of what might constitute the 'postcolonial'. It considers the socio-historical contexts behind the emergence of postcolonial studies and asks you to think critically about the institutionalisation, and challenges, of the field. You will consider issues of colonialism, decolonisation, nationalism, neo-colonialism and globalisation, along with the accompanying themes of migration, gendered/sexual politics and the role of history.*

### Romantic Conflicts (15 credits)

- *Conflict can be found in all literature. However, in the Romantic period it seems to have been the essence of the spirit of the age. Percy Shelley called the French Revolution of 1789 'the master theme of the epoch in which we live', and indeed many critics and historians date the beginning of the Romantic period from then. William Hazlitt notes: 'the French revolution might be described as a remote but inevitable result of the invention of the art of printing.' What he means here is that an overwhelming public consensus had to be achieved before a revolution could occur and the only way to achieve this is through the mass dissemination of ideas – through literature.*

### News and Feature Writing (15 credits)

- *This module introduces students to the techniques of print journalism, focusing on news reports and feature articles. The skills required for effective news and feature writing are a key component of writing craft in any genre of fiction or non-fiction, providing a discipline that can improve the imaginative work and communicative power of those who practice it. The significance of journalistic writing in contemporary life is explored using examples from a range of British tabloid, broadsheet and local publications. Students practise sourcing news reports, developing feature articles and sub-editing for style and content.*

### Victorian Literature and Culture (15 credits)

- *This module is structured around three main themes: 'The Impersonating I', 'Victorians and Globalization' and 'Sensation, Scandal and Serialization'. These themes are central to the current re-formulation of Victorian studies and, as we work through them, you will be asked to engage with new critical developments in the field.*

### The European Novel: Transgressive Desires (15 credits)

- *This module will introduce you to a representative selection of some of the most memorable and significant European novels, ranging from ancient Greek prose narratives and Renaissance romances to contemporary fiction. You will compare the ways in which different writers have handled elements of the novel such as characterisation, dialogue and narrative voice, as well as consider different sub-genres of the novel, for example magic realism and the epistolary novel.*

## Writing WW1: Trauma, Memory, Resistance (15 credits)

- *As WWI is commemorated at its centenary, this module examines a range of texts to consider current understanding of the conflict and its representations. We will start by looking at the poems that have famously memorialised the experience of soldiers on the Western Front before widening our address to texts that present a more diverse range of wartime experiences on the 'home front' and 'forbidden zone'. Each two-hour seminar will have a (mini) lecture with a thematic focus.*

## Adapting the Canon (15 credits)

- *This module that will give you the opportunity to investigate strategies of adaptation and to critically assess the afterlives of classical, biblical and canonical literary texts. Through a series of case studies, you will be encouraged to analyse and debate Walter Benjamin's claim that "storytelling is always the art of repeating stories" and Linda Hunchon's description of adaptation as repetition "but repetition without replication."*

## Final year for full-time students (Level 6)

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### Undergraduate Major Project (30 credits)

- *The individual Dissertation/Major Project module allows students to engage in a substantial piece of individual research and/or product development work, focused on a topic relevant to their specific discipline. The dissertation/project topic will be assessed for suitability to ensure sufficient academic challenge and satisfactory supervision by an academic member of staff.*

### Spectacle & Representation in Renaissance Drama (15 credits)

- *Students will consider a range of plays from the period 1580 to 1642 in the light of issues of stage spectacle and representation in a variety of forms, including identity, sexuality, violence, and death. You will experience one of the greatest periods of dramatic writing that English literature has known, which has subsequently continued on the English stage under the UK's great acting companies, including the Royal Shakespeare Company and National Theatre.*

### Contemporary Fiction (15 credits)

- *This module looks at a range of fiction published since 2000, examining formal and thematic issues and the relationships between them. Since there is inevitably an absence of established critical texts on the contemporary works studied, the course will consider alternative methods of reading; alternative sources of critical opinion (academic journals, the internet, broadsheet and broadcast journalism); and the ways in which new novels demand and shape new criticism.*

### Working in English and Media (15 credits)

- *This module provides a specific focus on work experience activity for students of English (including Creative Writing), Film and Media, in preparation for targeted entry into professional occupations in the domain of film, TV, cinema, radio, video, journalism, screenwriting, and related industries. Students identify, negotiate and carry out a work placement, or produce a commissioned product, in a chosen area, with guidance from the module leader.*

### Theorising Children's Literature (15 credits)

- *This module will take as its starting point the need to be critical about literature written for young audiences. Children's literature will be considered as literature instead of as a contributing factor towards childhood development or socialisation. We will consider works by Lewis Carroll and other famous authors in the light of selected literary theory.*

### World Literature (15 credits)

- *When a story can go 'viral' in a matter of minutes and popular franchises inspire devotion from fans worldwide, we are forced to ask what the role of literature is in the contemporary moment. This module therefore asks you to consider how we might understand the term 'world literature'. It combines short theoretical readings with a select body of fiction from regions as diverse as Africa, the Caribbean, the Middle East, South Asia and America. This writing addresses both local conditions and global concerns, encouraging you to think about the interconnectedness, but also the inequalities of modernity.*

**Decade: 1950s (15 credits)**

- *This module explores a range of texts including novels, children's fiction, poetry and plays. It examines the post WW2 landscape and the emerging trends of postmodern thought, from time slips to angry young men and the absurdity of modern life. This module takes a look at literature across a decade to identify common themes and ideas about a decade where Harold Macmillan stated: "We have never had it so good."*