

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

For the award of MA Creative Writing (HU51/MA-CRW)

Managed by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

delivered by Department of English and Modern Languages

Date approved:	June 2008
Applies to students commencing study in:	September 20-21

RECORD OF UPDATES

Date amended*	Nature of amendment**	Reason for amendment**

Extend list as necessary.

*Date of meeting of Faculty AESC, validation panel, or other authorised body at which changes were formally approved.

**Give brief outline of what has been updated and why (e.g. section 4.2 updated due to changes in PSRB requirements).

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Awarding body:	Oxford Brookes University
Teaching institution and location:	Oxford Brookes University
Language of study:	English
Final award/s:	MA
Programme title:	Creative Writing
Interim exit awards and award titles available:	PGCert, PGDip
Brookes course code:	HU51/MA-CRW
UCAS code:	N/A
JACS code:	W800
HECoS code:	100046
Mode of delivery: (Mode of Study given in brackets)	Face to face/on-campus (full-time) Face to face/on-campus (part-time)
Duration of study:	1 year – Full Time 2 years – Part Time 8 years – Maximum possible duration
Subject benchmark statement/s which apply to the programme:	https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-creative-writing-16.pdf?sfvrsn=d4e2f781_10
Professional accreditation attached to the programme:	N/A
Apprenticeship Standard:	N/A
University Regulations:	The programme conforms to the University Regulations for the year of entry as published/archived at: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/

SECTION 2: WHY STUDY THIS PROGRAMME?

The programme aims to provide a range of full-time and part-time postgraduate creative writing study and practise opportunities to graduates from a wide range of disciplines who are seeking to enhance their existing creative writing skills, and to deepen their understanding of creative practice so that they may become more effective practitioners. The programme provides students with the opportunity to work with established – and currently publishing - writers in a number of generic forms (prose poetry, non-fiction, commercial writing) to develop their understanding of both the craft and the industry of writing. The programme also offers networking opportunities with industry professionals such as agents and publishers. One particularly distinctive element of the programme is the opportunity to learn from Creative Writing Fellows who meet regularly with students to pass on experience and to focus on specific aspects of writing practice.

Aims of the programme

The MA in Creative Writing enables students to:

1. Develop existing creative writing skills in a range of genres towards a publishable standard*;
2. Undertake a substantial creative writing project in a genre of their choosing;
3. Practice creative writing and reading skills with a range of writing practitioners, including peers and published writers;
4. Acquire a practical understanding of the techniques of writing, editing and working within the parameters of the writing and publishing industry and related creative and cultural industries;
5. Engage with theoretical approaches to creativity and creative practice;
6. Demonstrate an appropriate knowledge of literary conventions and historical and contemporary contexts for writing;
7. Explore their own position as writers within specific locales and histories.

*The expression 'publishable standard' is here taken to mean work that merits public dissemination in whatever form, beyond the remit and confines of this MA course.

Staff profiles including their teaching and research specialisms can be accessed at:
<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/english-languages/staff-and-students/academic-staff/>

SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the programme, graduates will demonstrate the following Brookes Attributes:

3.1 ACADEMIC LITERACY

- ability to demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the historical precedents and contemporary contexts for their own creative writing.
- ability to demonstrate a systematic knowledge of the variety of techniques, processes, actions and approaches in creative writing.
- ability to undertake the advanced analysis of text and related areas of knowledge and practice in creative writing and critical commentary.

3.2 RESEARCH LITERACY

- ability to demonstrate an advanced and explicit understanding of the methods of discovery and invention, research and reflection, which inform the production of a piece of creative writing and critical commentary.
- expertise in techniques of writing: especially in re-drafting, editing and final presentation; ability to write with precision and effectiveness.
- ability to exercise initiative and personal responsibility in professional and creative contexts; ability to work as an independent writer and resourceful researcher.

3.3 CRITICAL SELF-AWARENESS AND PERSONAL LITERACY

- ability to critically evaluate creative writing practice of their own and of others across a range of genres.
- ability to synthesise an appropriate range of textual and related resources in the production of creative writing and critical commentary.
- ability to apply knowledge and skills and to demonstrate initiative and independence in creative writing.
- ability to communicate effectively and explore best practice in creative writing contexts.
- ability to exercise initiative and personal responsibility in professional and creative practice, in particular adapting skills and developing resources independently and imaginatively in response to new conditions, contexts and technologies.
- ability to make reasoned and informed decisions about potential publication and funding opportunities for written work and to generate writing of a potentially publishable standard.
- ability to work productively in a group; a recognition of the need to guide and support peers; readiness to seek, offer, respond to, and act upon constructive criticism.
- ability to reflect on your own work and take the responses of others into account.
- ability not only to solve problems as currently perceived, but also to pose problems as they may be reconceived; ability to follow through with alternative strategies appropriate to fresh options and challenges.
- ability to communicate confidently, effectively and engagingly, drawing on appropriate verbal, textual and other resources, showing awareness of situation, audience and purpose.

3.4 DIGITAL AND INFORMATION LITERACY

- ability to use imaginatively an appropriate and effective range of learning resources with discrimination, accuracy and relevance.
- ability to use information-technology skills with word-processing and presentation programmes, and display an ability to access, process and produce electronic data as necessary.
- ability to explore, if appropriate, the formal and imaginative potentialities of digital, and other new media, creativity.

3.5 ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

- acquire a flexible appreciation of human diversity through the study of English as a global language with distinct variations across times, places and cultures.
- Explore the treatment of issues of global significance through a range of creative and critical cultural products.

SECTION 4: CURRICULUM CONTENT & STRUCTURE

4.1 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS:

Code	Module Title	Credits	Level	Status	Coursework: Exam ratio
P67100/ CWRI7001	The Writing Studio	40	7	Compulsory	100%CW
P67101/ CWRI7002	Poetry	40	7	Acceptable	100%CW
P67102/ CWRI7003	Narrative	40	7	Acceptable	100%CW
P67103/ CWRI7004	The Writing Project	60	7	Compulsory	100% CW
P67105/ CWRI7005	Writing Lives	40	7	Acceptable	100%CW
P67106/ CWRI7006	Writing Voice	40	7	Acceptable	100%CW
P67107/ CWRI7007	Shorter Forms	40	7	Acceptable	100%CW
P67088/ ENGL7014	Independent Study Module	40	7	Acceptable	Updated in May 2018

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4.2 PROGRESSION AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Indicate any specific requirements for progression and awards in respect of the modules that must be passed, including any requirements that must be met to qualify for interim exit awards:

- 1. PG Cert: 80 credits, comprising**
 - P67100/CWRI7001 The Writing Studio (40 credits)
 - One 40 credit Elective Module
- 2. PG Dip: 120 credits, comprising:**
 - P67100/CWRI7001 The Writing Studio (40 credits)
 - 2 x 40 credit Elective Modules
- 3. MA: 180 credits, comprising:**
 - P67100/CWRI7001 The Writing Studio (40 credits)
 - 2 x 40 credit Elective Modules
 - P67103/CWRI7004 The Writing Project (60 credits)

Students must have obtained passes in P67100/CWRI7001 and in 40 credits of approved elective modules before proceeding to The Writing Project. Part-Time students will normally have completed all their elective module requirements (80 credits) before proceeding to P67103/CWRI7004.

Students who have achieved passes in both elective modules only after resubmission may be counselled against proceeding with the dissertation module and advised to proceed to the award of Postgraduate Diploma.

Please see details of the **Assessment and Progression Policy**, under the general page for Regulation for Study.

<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/assessment-and-progression>

4.3 PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

N/A

SECTION 5: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

There are a variety of teaching and learning methods used across the programme. All modules use more than one learning and teaching method, and this ensures students experience a range of different learning opportunities, which helps maintain student motivation and interest and which results in effective learning.

Some of the key teaching methods used are:

- *Seminars and Workshops* designed to encourage students to engage in discussion with peers and tutors to develop their understanding, to enhance their transferable skills, and to encourage deeper learning and creative practice
- *Visiting Speakers* in the form of practicing writers and industry professionals designed to enable students to engage with current practice in writing and to develop an awareness of the markets and processes involved in the creation of writing.
- *Oral Presentation* of on-going work and potential creative writing projects
- *Constructive Group Critique* of peers' work
- *Workshop* activities which stimulate the production of creative writing pieces and reflection on specific themes, techniques and skills.
- *Autonomous research and writing* to support the production of creative writing pieces and The Writing Project.

- *Individual supervision* in support of self-directed outcomes for The Writing Project.

Academic Literacy

At the heart of the programme is the transfer of advanced disciplinary knowledge appropriate to the level of postgraduate study. The programme serves to build on existing core knowledge of the fields of Creative Writing theory and practice, and avail students of the means to become sophisticated practitioners who are self-reflexive thinkers and writers of an expert order. Much of this knowledge exchange takes place in seminars where students learn in dialogue with tutors and peers. Students test and evaluate critical and theoretical models through techniques such as close-reading, workshopping group work and individual or group presentations. Students are encouraged to think flexibly and creatively, and they are expected to be able rigorously to contextualise their interpretations within appropriate and current models of knowledge whether they be historical, generic or theoretical. Tutorials enable students to explore further their understanding and to plan its deployment in the context of their assignments.

Research Literacy

Though the Creative Writing programme is largely designed around a practice-based format which emphasises the staged development of a student's imaginative and formal enunciation of their ideas, research literacy underpins the core transmission and presentation of knowledge and skill mastery. Through research, students display their increasing awareness of the forms, conventions, historical precedents and methodologies that inform their own writing, and synthesise these through practice-based assignments. As their critical voices grow in confidence, they are increasingly expected to locate information, evaluate its validity, synthesise it within a coherent methodological praxis, and present it persuasively. Learning on compulsory and elective modules is frequently based around researching, accessing and deconstructing textual forebears in order to master the principles of creative construction, and the skills learned in these processes are brought together in The Writing Project which stands as the culmination of students' work. Throughout the programme, teaching and learning seeks to inculcate good practice around research methods through rigorous adherence to referencing systems and through the discouragement of academic misconduct.

Critical Self-Awareness and Personal Literacy

The disciplinary expectations that inform the programme rest securely on the notions of self-reflective reading, internalisation and productive discussion. Studying Creative Writing at Masters level demands a consciousness of self and of one's position within the vectors of society, race, gender, politics and sexuality and from the commencement of their study students are encouraged to question their roles in the production and consumption of culture. The study of literature is the study of the real world, and our programme necessitates the development of a high level of self-awareness and the ability to critique one's position within the world and to express it cogently and confidently. Seminar teaching, workshops and tutorials in particular foster these graduate attributes, and regular access to publishing writers and industry professionals engenders a strong sense of place within a functioning, dynamic community of producers and consumers. Feedback on assessment (oral and written, formative and summative) stresses the importance of students learning to be self-critical and to operate within personal scholarly practices that correspond with the wider principles of the discipline.

Digital and Information Literacy

Teaching and learning strategies within the programme stress the importance of flexibility and imagination in the implementation of information. The research-driven focus of the Elective modules teach students to engage with information, and information sources, critically and carefully. Information retrieval, sifting, synthesis and presentation is fundamental to every module on the programme, and students are encouraged to think clearly about how and why they use information. Digital technologies are implemented appropriately as part of pedagogic practice, and students are expected to utilise standard presentation packages as part of the assessments and as a means of showing the development of their work. This involves word-processing and powerpoint but also extends to collaborative wikis and other interactive networking. The ramifications of increasingly digitalised cultural interaction are addressed in the curriculum through Creative Writing staff and Fellows' writing specialisms and industry affiliations.

Active Citizenship

Creative Writing is comfortably positioned to meet the criteria of Global Citizenship as the study of literature is fundamentally rooted not just in the nature of the human being, but also in the commonality of language. The programme directs students' attention towards issues of trans-historical, trans-national and inter-personal significance and to their responsibilities as citizens of increasingly globalised cultures. The programme directly addresses the attribute in the study of writing in translation and Anglophone literatures from beyond the UK, but heavy emphasis is also placed on the internationality of critical and theoretical thinking. The responsibility of expressing oneself as a global citizen and part of a plethora of communities (human, natural, technological, metaphysical) is fundamental to the practice of understanding oneself as a writer, and thus sits very comfortably with our programme.

Linking Teaching with Research

The programme is delivered by permanent staff members who are actively published writers, and as such their teaching will be intimately linked to their outputs as Creative Writers assessed under the REF framework.

Assessment and Feedback Policy

The programme operates a broad portfolio of assessment methods that are closely tied to the principles of the BAC. Students encounter a number of forms of modular assessment designed specifically to test the skills and core knowledge identified in the Learning Outcomes. These may include oral presentation as both individuals and groups, coursework essays, critical reviews and logbooks. Module handbooks identify specific Learning Outcomes and indicate which assessment tests which outcome and the MA Creative Writing Subject Handbook similarly indicates how each of the programme outcomes is reflected in the teaching, practice and assessment of the modules. Students are encouraged to engage in self and peer assessment and have the opportunity to submit a self-assessment evaluation sheet with their work which can subsequently be discussed with a module tutor. In addition students are entitled to 30 minutes tutorial time for 40 credit modules in which they can discuss their work and receive feedback on assignments. Assessment methods are reviewed annually and fed through Module Reports and the Annual Review procedure and issues concerning assessment are regularly discussed with student reps at Programme and Departmental meetings.

Details of the **Assessment and Feedback policy** can be found here.

<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/getmedia/f614bd44-70b4-4d1a-85d8-1fd580819d3a/Assessment-and-Feedback-Policy.pdf>

SECTION 6: ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAMME

6.1 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants should normally hold a good honours degree (2:1 or above), or its equivalent, in an appropriate discipline and must be able to demonstrate ability in creative writing. A portfolio of recent creative work must be submitted, including examples of different modes and/or genres (2 or 3 pieces in total) and applicants will usually be interviewed.

Applicants whose first language is not English should hold one of the following qualifications:

- British Council (IELTS) Test: band 7 overall with at least 6 in each band
- Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency: grade C or above
- NEAB University Test in English for Speakers of Other Languages: Pass
- JMB Test in English for Overseas Students: grade 1, 2 or 3

An offer of a place on the course is subject to acceptance by the student of the conditions of acceptance set out in the University's prospectus. Staff reserve the right to reject applicants on the basis of their portfolio alone. Staff will not enter into detailed feedback on portfolios or on any other aspect of the application process.

6.2 DBS AND OTHER PRE-COURSE CHECKS REQUIRED

N/A

6.3 JOB ROLE/EMPLOYER PROFILE (DEGREE AND HIGHER APPRENTICESHIPS)

N/A

SECTION 7: PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Please provide information about how the programme has been designed to prepare students for employment. This may include, for example: the involvement of visiting lecturers from relevant industries/professions; involvement of relevant professionals/employers in other learning activities; mentoring; work placements (optional or integral to the programme); any other opportunities for work-based learning.

The specific nature of the Creative Writing MA – its practice-based structure, its emphasis on inspiration as well as craft, and its focus on striving to fulfil the creative ambitions of its students – means that many enrolling students benefit from the course as a parallel to working lives, achieving the desire to improve their writing alongside other careers. Many, however, are striving towards writing as a career and the programme seeks to assist these students as much as possible. The English and Modern Language department's close links with the Oxford International Centre for Publishing Studies fosters positive relations with industry professionals and the University as a whole benefits enormously from its location in a city with an international reputation for publishing. Creative Writing Fellows from the Publishing world advise students on the best ways into print and regular events in which students can present their work to literary agents, provide ample opportunities for symbiotic relations between the academy and industry.

As well as becoming self-funding writers, Creative Writing graduates go on to a wide variety of jobs in a number of different employment sectors. The following list is indicative of common destinations but is in no way comprehensive:

- Arts administration and management
- Charity work
- Civil Service
- Creative Industries
- Law
- Marketing
- Publishing
- Retail
- Teaching