



Department of English

BA English & Creative Writing



ROYAL
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UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON



English & Creative Writing



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Why choose English & Creative Writing at Royal Holloway?

Creative Writing has a significant presence at both undergraduate and postgraduate level at Royal Holloway. We have a very strong and established team made up of academic staff with substantial experience of teaching Creative Writing and significant publication records.

Our BA offers a three-year joint honours degree in either English & Creative Writing, or Drama & Creative Writing (in partnership with the Department of Drama & Theatre), which pairs the traditional study of English Literature (or Drama) with study that focuses on practice-based work in Creative Writing.

We also offer two MAs in the field: the MA in Creative Writing, which is recognised as one of the leading UK Creative Writing MAs, and the MA in Poetic Practice, which was built on the Department of English's success in developing its distinctive Poetic Practice

option at BA level. We also have a substantial number of doctoral students whose PhD research includes the production of creative work. A growing number of our MA and PhD students have gone on to success as writers, both in fiction and poetry.

Our Creative Writing degrees place writing practice at the heart of your learning experience, rigorously testing that practice against your growing awareness of contemporary theoretical and cultural debates.

At the same time, by combining Creative Writing with English or Drama, you will learn to place these contemporary debates within a larger cultural context. The value of these joint-degree options is clear in terms of the development of your individual creative writing practice and exposure to a wider study of literature or drama.



Ranked 4th in the UK for Creative Writing (Times Good University Guide, 2015)

Increasingly within English degrees in higher education, creative practice – the writing of poetry, drama and fiction – has taken its place alongside more traditional research methods as a means of investigating and understanding literature. The principle is long-established within British Theatre Studies departments that practical exploration complements and supports theoretical discussion and textual analysis. The Creative Writing degree at Royal Holloway extends this principle to the study of literature.

There is a unique insight to be gained by considering texts from within, appreciating as a practitioner the techniques and innovations of a text, the stylistic and cultural interventions that the writer is making, and that one wishes to make as a writer oneself. These are insights that can be shared, and the gaining of such insights through

a combination of traditional analysis and creative involvement with a variety of literary forms is a uniquely valuable experience.

In addition, to learn how to generate and shape an artistic work is a valuable life skill, with uses and applications far beyond the immediate tasks of writing poems, plays, scripts and novels. The essential tasks for your own work – considering questions of character, voice, ambiguity, style and cultural context – are themselves crucial skills of value to any kind of writing, from journalism and website creation, to advertising, copywriting and academic publishing. This degree offers an advanced course in cultural understanding and appreciation, encouraging you to learn how to articulate and debate the process of cultural production and to find an appropriate language in order to express and assess artistic achievement.



Degree structure

As this is a joint degree course, students will take two units of Creative Writing each year, and two units of English. These are organised as follows:

First year

Creative Writing

You will take both of the following courses:

- Introduction to Creative Writing (Fiction, Playwriting, Poetry)
- Why Write? The History and Theory of Creative Writing

Each of these courses is one unit in value, and will take the form of seminars/workshops.

English

You will take both of the following courses, run as lectures/seminars:

- Inventing the Novel
- Introducing English Poetry

Each of these courses is one unit in value, and will take the form of lectures/seminars.

It will be necessary to pass Introduction to Creative Writing and Why Write? as well as the English units to proceed into the second year.

Second year

Creative Writing

You are required take two of the following options:

- Playwriting
- Fiction
- Poetry

All these courses are one unit in value, and will take the form of seminars/workshops.

English

You are required take one of the following whole English units:

- Debates in Contemporary Literature
- Renaissance Literature
- Victorian Literature
- Romanticisms
- Modernist Literature

In addition, you will be required to take two half units from the range of English units offered (these can change from year to year).



Third year

Creative Writing

You are required to take the following whole unit option:

- Creative Writing Special Focus

You will also have the opportunity to choose from a variety of available Special Focus topics, which change from year to year based on the research interests of the teaching staff.

In addition, you will also take one of the following options for your Final Project in Creative Writing:

- Playwriting 2
- Fiction 2
- Poetry 2

Final projects are one unit in value and are taught through intensive one-to-one tutorials across the year. There is also a lecture series devoted to issues around professional practice and the generation of long-term projects.

English

You are required to take one unit from the three following options:

- Dissertation
- Special Author Project
- Special Topic

You must also take one unit from a range of whole or half-unit options.

First year unit Introduction to Creative Writing, is broadly focused and is intended to introduce you to a wide range of creative forms within fiction, poetry and playwriting. You will also take the course, Why Write? designed to introduce you to a range of debates about the value and significance of

creative writing, against which we expect you to test your own ideas. This prepares you for the choices you will make in your second year, where you will select two literary forms in which to specialise, before taking one of those forms to honours level in the third year.

Creative Writing develops best over longer periods rather than through intense development, and our course is designed to foster a three-year process of creative development and understanding.

Year three also includes the Creative Writing Special Focus course, which concentrates on a particular mode of writing, genre, theme, issue or idea. Each focus draws on one of our teaching staff's area of interest and expertise, with the focus changing each term. You will be encouraged to make creative work in relation to the focus, and to develop your writing practice in relation to wider contexts relevant to the contemporary writer. This will make an important connection between the creative ambitions of the course and writing beyond Royal Holloway.



Admissions and entry requirements

Applications

Our standard offer is AAB with an A in English. We also welcome mature students who are coming to higher education from alternative routes.

Applicants are required to complete two short creative assignments, details of which are made available on the English department website, as well as in an email that will be sent when we receive your UCAS application.

You will need to apply to all our full-time undergraduate degrees through UCAS via ucas.ac.uk

You can email enquiries@ucas.ac.uk for general information and guidance on UCAS procedures.

The UCAS code for Royal Holloway is R72 and the course code for English & Creative Writing is QW38.

We invite you to attend one of our Applicant Visit Days, where you will be able to visit both departments, meet teaching staff and students and explore our campus.

Further details can be found on our website royalholloway.ac.uk

Entry requirements

A levels:

AAB (A in English)

BTEC National Diploma

BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma:

Distinction, Distinction, Distinction

International Baccalaureate:

34 points (6 in HL English)

(Please note that General Studies at A level is not accepted as one of our A level requirements).

Alternative qualifications

Special consideration is given to applicants without a conventional educational background, such as mature applicants and applicants returning to study through an Access course. We also consider all appropriate overseas qualifications. International applicants are expected to have considerable proficiency in the English language and the minimum levels we usually consider are an IELTS score with minimum sub-scores of 7, or a TOEFL score of 570.



Teaching and assessment

Teaching in Creative Writing is delivered through seminars and workshops, though there may also be lectures for some parts of the course. For specialised third-year courses (Playwriting 2, Fiction 2, Poetry 2), individual tuition is offered. You will also benefit from field trips, visiting speakers and day conferences, which bring together established figures in the field, providing a valuable variation on standard practice.

You will learn through a variety of means, including participation in seminars and workshops, through private study and written

assignments. In the third year, you will be encouraged to do a certain amount of field work to research the creative industries appropriate to the writing practice in which you have specialised. Most crucially, though, you will learn experientially, through the process of writing, receiving feedback, learning from others, rewriting, and seeing your work performed, installed or published.

For more information about our staff and their research interests, visit royalholloway.ac.uk/english/research



Your future career



We are ranked in the top five English departments in the country for graduate career prospects* and our English & Creative Writing graduates go on to succeed in many fields, including: journalism, marketing, publishing, creative writing, investment banking and business analysis, among others.

You will be equipped with the wide knowledge and practical skills required to enter an extremely competitive job market. A degree in English & Creative Writing provides a range of transferable skills, including oral and written presentation skills, time management, and the ability to work independently, which are highly valued by employers. You will also benefit from Royal Holloway's dedicated Careers Service and the wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities we offer our students, from themed career sector weeks, to readings by successful authors.

* Complete University Guide, 2014



GRADUATE VIEW

Lusana Taylor, BA English & Creative Writing,
Production Editor, Choc Lit

"My job as an editor at a women's fiction publisher has allowed me to draw on the skills I learned at Royal Holloway, such as how to critique manuscripts and support authors through editorial processes. As an English & Creative Writing graduate there are plenty of opportunities for you to use your degree in the creative sector!"





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