

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION – POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

KEY FACTS

Programme name	Creative Writing
Award	MFA
School	School of Arts and Social Sciences
Department or equivalent	English
Programme code	PSCRWF
Type of study	Full time and Part time
Total UK credits	300
Total ECTS	150
Partner (partnership programmes only)	N/A
Type of partnership	N/A

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The MFA Creative Writing offers you the opportunity to consolidate your knowledge and skills in Creative Writing by developing a full-length original and potentially publishable manuscript in your chosen genre. You will gain a deep understanding of your craft and will be able to reflect critically upon your stylistic and formal decisions and situate them in their cultural and literary contexts. You will also acquire a detailed knowledge of all aspects of being a professional writer and will develop a comprehensive understanding of the business of writing. You will also complete a module on Creative Writing pedagogy that will provide you with a basis for understanding how Creative Writing functions in different types of educational settings. This combination of creative and practical skills will prepare you for a career as a writer as well as for a broad range of careers that draw upon the programme's transferable skills.

The first year of the MFA follows the taught structure of the MA Creative Writing, which brings together core practice-based workshops in imaginative writing with a module diet that develops your awareness of writing as a professional practice; a varied assessment regime that fosters your subject-specific and transferable skills; and elective modules in English Literature and/or Publishing that provide you with opportunities for advanced literary study and the acquisition of the knowledge and skills associated with publishing. Your learning will be enhanced by visiting editors, writers and literary agents and by the proximity of City to a range of literary events, festivals and readings. In the third term you will also submit an extended piece of creative writing that provides you with the opportunity to put into practice the skills and knowledge acquired through the taught modules.

In your second year you will work closely with a supervisor, a staff member who is an expert and published writer in your chosen genre. This one-to-one supervision will provide you with rigorous constructive feedback and expert guidance as you work towards completion of your substantial full-length manuscript. You will be supported in your development as a professional writer by the Department's well-established links with editors, agents and publishers, who regularly feature as guest lecturers, workshop leaders and mentors, and who often attend our programme of student

readings, City Nights, in which students present portions of their work in progress. You will benefit from extracurricular opportunities such as student anthologies and readings by acclaimed authors in addition to other Department-sponsored literary events. You will also benefit from City's reputation as a provider of academic excellence for business and the professions and from London's outstanding research, cultural and creative facilities.

In the first year the taught element of the programme consists of one core elective 60-credit creative writing workshop in your chosen genre; two core 15-credit modules in academic and professional practice; and a further 30 credits selected from a range of elective modules in English Literature or Publishing.

At the end of your first year you will submit a Dissertation, an extended piece of creative writing in your chosen genre. You will also submit a plan for completion of the Major Project. The detailed feedback you receive in the assessment of the Dissertation will prepare you for completing the Major Project.

In your second year you will complete the Major Project, a substantial piece of creative writing, under the close supervision of an expert in your chosen genre. The Major Project may be a section of a novel, a piece or pieces of creative non-fiction, or several short stories. You will also submit a Reflective Essay in which you reflect on how the literary and theoretical issues that inform your chosen genre have shaped and influenced your own creative practice. In the second year you will also complete a 15-credit module on Teaching Creative Writing.

Aims

- To develop the skills and confidence necessary to plan, research, critically evaluate and execute a substantial full-length manuscript in Creative Writing for potential publication
- To develop a professional approach to editing, revising and critiquing creative work, both your own and that of others
- To develop a practical understanding of the publishing industry and how to present and market creative work
- To equip you with a broad range of transferable skills appropriate for graduate careers in Creative Writing
- To prepare you for further PhD study and research and to expedite your access to such programmes.

WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?

On successful completion of this programme, you will be expected to be able to:

Knowledge and understanding:

- Evidence mastery of the skills and techniques involved in writing in a particular genre by producing a substantial piece of original creative work to a high standard in terms of presentation, structure and style
- Comprehend industry-standard expectations for publication of your writing

- Demonstrate through reflective practice critical awareness of the contexts in which your writing is produced and how your practice relates to that of predecessors and contemporaries
- Conceptualise, design and complete a substantial piece of original creative writing

Skills:

- Engage in the creative process and prepare to professional standards a manuscript for potential publication
- Apply knowledge of creative writing skills in an original way
- Reflect critically on written work, both your own and that of others
- Display self-direction and originality and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks

Values and attitudes:

- Show sensitivity to cultural contexts and issues of diversity when working with others
- Display open-mindedness towards constructive criticism of your own work and develop sensitivity in discussion and debate with others

This programme has been developed in accordance with the QAA Subject Benchmark 'Master's Degree Characteristics' (September 2015) and the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement 'Creative Writing' (February 2016).

HOW WILL I LEARN?

In the first year you will acquire knowledge and understanding through a mix of writing workshops, individual tutorials, formal lectures, seminar contributions, study visits, project work and independent learning and research. Visiting speakers, including guest authors and publishers, are invited regularly to support your learning and module projects and to contextualise other knowledge and skills you'll learn on the programme. You are encouraged, through a variety of strategies, to reflect on professional practice and professional frameworks during all of your applied work.

You will be expected to participate and to engage actively during class contact time. This strategy is guided by the educational aim to develop you as a reflective practitioner who engages with appropriate and relevant research and literature. This strategy is interpreted broadly as including the taking of a critical stance on your own work, independent reading and debating issues related to Creative Writing study with peers.

In the first year of study full-time students can expect between 10 and 12 hours of classroom-based study per week, depending on the choice of modules, plus time spent on preparatory reading, independent study and practice-based research, and preparation of assignments. Part-time students should typically expect half of this contact time. There is a significant amount of independent study within each module and this time is for you to read literature related to the modules you are studying, to observe and interact with peers, and to plan and develop your assessments as well as

reflect on your development as an independent, self-directed writer. In the third term you will work independently on your Dissertation with structured tutorial support.

In the second year you will work independently on your Major Project under the close supervision of a staff member who is an expert in your chosen genre. You will also complete a 15-credit module on Creative Writing pedagogy.

WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?

Assessment and Assessment Criteria

Summative assessment of the programme outcomes occurs across the core and elective modules and in the Dissertation and Major Project. Individual modules deploy a range of assessment methods, and include portfolios of creative writing, analytical essays, assessed group and individual projects (including presentations with supporting research), portfolios of writing and publishing research which demonstrate evidence of skills gained through reflective analysis, and research-based assignments.

The Dissertation provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate the skills and understanding you have acquired through the taught provision.

The Major Project allows you to complete a substantial piece of original creative writing to a high professional standard and will be assessed on a set of criteria which establish literary merit, originality and the mastery of established literary conventions and techniques. The Reflective Essay provides you with an opportunity to critically evaluate how such conventions and techniques have shaped your development as a creative writer.

Assessment Criteria are descriptions, based on the intended learning outcomes, of the skills, knowledge or attitudes that you need to demonstrate in order to complete an assessment successfully, providing a mechanism by which the quality of an assessment can be measured. Grade-Related Criteria are descriptions of the level of skills, knowledge or attributes that you need to demonstrate in order to achieve a certain grade or mark in an assessment, providing a mechanism by which the quality of an assessment can be measured and placed within the overall set of marks. Assessment Criteria and Grade-Related Criteria will be made available to you to support you in completing assessments. These may be provided in programme handbooks, module specifications, on the virtual learning environment or attached to a specific assessment task.

Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided in line with our Assessment and Feedback Policy. In particular, you will normally be provided with feedback within three weeks of the submission deadline or assessment date. This would normally include a provisional grade or mark. For end of module examinations or an equivalent significant task (e.g. an end of module project), feedback will normally be provided within four weeks. The timescale for feedback on final year projects or dissertations may be longer. The full policy can be found at:

[https://www.city.ac.uk/ data/assets/pdf file/0008/68921/assessment and feedback policy.pdf](https://www.city.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/68921/assessment_and_feedback_policy.pdf)

Assessment Regulations

In order to pass your Programme, you should complete successfully all modules in order to acquire the required number of credits. Each credit carries equal weighting. The pass mark for each module is 50%. There is no minimum qualifying mark for assessment components: you must pass modules on aggregate.

Resit: where you have failed a module at the first attempt, you will be offered one resit attempt.

If you are successful in the resit, you will be awarded the credit for that module. The mark for each assessment component that is subject to a resit will be capped at the pass mark for the module. This capped mark will be used in the calculation of the final module mark together with the original marks for the components that you passed at first attempt.

If you do not meet the pass requirements for a module and do not complete your resit by the date specified you will not progress and the Assessment Board will require that you be withdrawn from the Programme.

If you fail to meet the requirements for the Programme, the Assessment Board will consider whether you are eligible for an Exit Award as per the table below.

If you would like to know more about the way in which assessment works at City, please see the full version of the Assessment Regulations at:
[http://www.city.ac.uk/ data/assets/word doc/0003/69249/s19.doc](http://www.city.ac.uk/data/assets/word_doc/0003/69249/s19.doc)

WHAT AWARD CAN I GET?

Master of Fine Arts (MFA) Degree:

You will be awarded a MFA when you have successfully completed Parts 1 and 2 of the programme.

	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)	Class	% required
Taught	7	120	40	With Distinction	70
Dissertation	7	60	20	With Merit	60
				Without classification	50
Major Project	7	105	35		

Teaching Creative Writing	7	15	5
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Master's Degree:

If you successfully complete Part 1 and wish to exit the programme at this point you may be awarded the exit award of the MA Creative Writing.

	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Taught	7	120	67
Dissertation	7	60	33

Class **% required**

With Distinction	70
With Merit	60
Without classification	50

Postgraduate Diploma:

If you fail to meet the requirements for the Master's and have exhausted all permitted resit opportunities but have achieved 120 credits at Level 7 you may be awarded the exit award of the Postgraduate Diploma in Creative Writing.

	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Taught	7	120	100

Class **% required**

With Distinction	70
With Merit	60
Without classification	50

Postgraduate Certificate:

If you fail to meet the requirements for the PG Dip and have exhausted all permitted resit opportunities, but have achieved 60 credits at Level 7 you may be awarded the exit award of the Postgraduate Certificate in Creative writing.

	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Taught	7	60	100

Class **% required**

With Distinction	70
With Merit	60
Without classification	50

****Please note: you will not receive the award of MA in addition to the MFA award.**

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The MFA award consists of 120 credits of taught modules, a 60-credit dissertation which is an extended piece of creative writing from your proposed full-length piece of work, and a 105-credit Major Project, which is supervised. You will also complete a 15-credit module on Teaching Creative Writing.

In Part 1, you will complete 180 credits, following the MA Creative Writing structure.

Part 2 is dedicated to the Major Project (105 credits). Part 2 includes a 15-credit module on Teaching Creative Writing.

Part One: Taught Component and Dissertation Component

You will complete a total of 120 credits of taught modules, which includes one core elective 60-credit workshop, two core 15-credit modules, and two 15-credit elective modules in English Literature and Publishing. You will also complete the 60-credit dissertation module which will be an extended piece of creative writing from your proposed full-length piece of work that will make up your major component in Part 2.

All taught modules are in Term 1 and Term 2. Term 3 is dedicated to the Dissertation component, and to completion of assignments from Term 2 modules.

Core Modules (2 x 15 credits)

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Compensation Yes/No	Level
Reading as a Writer	CWM965	15	Core	No	7
Working as a Writer	CWM967	15	Core	No	7

Core Elective (choose 1 x 60 credits)

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Compensation Yes/No	Level
Creative Writing Workshop—Fiction (Terms 1 and 2)	CWM968	60	Core Elective	No	7
Creative Writing Workshop—Genre Fiction (Terms 1 and 2)	CWM960	60	Core Elective	No	7
Creative Writing Workshop—Non-fiction (Terms 1 and 2)	CWM969	60	Core Elective	No	7

Electives (Choose 2 x 15 credits)

Constituting Identities	ENM004	15	Elective	Yes	7
Imagined Communities	ENM005	15	Elective	Yes	7
Literary Cartographies	ENM006	15	Elective	Yes	7
Genre in Context	ENM007	15	Elective	Yes	7
Theorising Women's Writing	ENM008	15	Elective	Yes	7
Text and Image	ENM009	15	Elective	Yes	7
Digital Publishing	PBM003	15	Elective	Yes	7
Creating & Developing Content in Print	PBM006	15	Elective	Yes	7
Strategic Management of Content: Print & Digital	PBM007	15	Elective	Yes	7
Digital Product Innovation	PBM011	15	Elective	Yes	7

Dissertation component

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Compensation Yes/No	Level
Creative Writing Dissertation	CWM970	60	Core	No	7

Part Two: Major Project component

The Major Project will be completed in Year 2 and is worth 105 credits.

In Part Two you will also complete the 15-credit module, Teaching Creative Writing (module code: CWM981). It will be reported on your university transcript.

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Compensation Yes/No	Level
Major Project and Reflective Essay	CWM980	105	Core	No	7
Teaching Creative Writing	CWM981	15	Core	No	7

TO WHAT KIND OF CAREER MIGHT I GO ON?

The MFA Creative Writing prepares you for a career as a writer. It also develops key transferable skills in oral and written communication relevant to a range of careers, including Teaching, Editing, Community Arts Work, Arts Management and Administration, Publishing and Journalism, and within other areas of the creative industries such as advertising and video or computer game production. You will get exposure to agents, editors and others within both traditional and electronic publishing. We have for many years supported the career prospects of our graduates wishing to work in publishing via supportive links with an industry advisory board as well as with alumni.

The MFA Creative Writing also prepares you for further PhD study and expedites your access to such programmes.

If you would like more information on the Careers support available at City, please go to: <http://www.city.ac.uk/careers/for-students-and-recent-graduates>.

WILL I GET ANY PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION?

No

HOW DO I ENTER THE PROGRAMME?

Applicants should usually hold a 2.1 honours degree or a BA-equivalent undergraduate degree from an international institution. Equivalent qualifications and/or notable experience as a creative writer will also be considered. Applicants must also submit a personal statement and a sample portfolio (5000 words) of creative writing that demonstrates a high level of skill and that includes a 300-word abstract of the longer piece of creative writing you plan to complete.

If your first language is not English, you will be expected to demonstrate Level 7.0 proficiency in the IELTS English language test.

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