PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION – POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

KEY FACTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme name</th>
<th>Creative Writing (Playwriting and Screenwriting)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Award</td>
<td>MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>School of Arts and Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department or equivalent</td>
<td>Department of Creative Practice and Enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme code</td>
<td>PSCWPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of study</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total UK credits</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total ECTS</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Creatively stimulating, challenging, and above all practical, this innovative full-time two year course provides a supportive and thought-provoking environment for playwrights and screenwriters to explore their ideas, develop their craft, and finish a full-length work to a high standard.

In the first year students acquire a critical understanding of classic and contemporary plays and films from the writer’s point of view, and an in-depth practical knowledge of playwriting and screenwriting. There are also specialist sessions on writing for radio and television drama. No single style or genre is prescribed; the ethos of the programme is excellence and diversity. The course is suitable for writers with some experience who want to develop their practice and ideas and work in the industry.

In the second year students choose to write either a full length play, or screenplay, or a pilot for an original television series (along with the series “bible” and synopses for several episodes). In addition to completing a full length play or script, students participate in workshops taught by practising screenwriters and playwrights, and have the opportunity to work with actors and to experience a professional script development process. There will be a showcase of work at the end of the programme to which industry professionals and advisory board members will be invited.

Aims

1) To provide a supportive, thought-provoking and challenging environment for would-be playwrights and screenwriters of proven commitment and ability so as to allow them to complete a play or feature film script to a high, professional standard.
2) To develop students’ skills in conceiving, structuring, researching and writing plays and feature film scripts.
3) To develop students’ critical understanding of the works of published writers.
4) To provide students with an understanding of the media’s relationship with writers and their work.
5) To provide students with an introduction to, and understanding of, the publishing industry.
6) To provide an introduction to writing drama for radio and different genres of TV.
7) To develop students’ ability to analyse play texts and film scripts to a high standard.
8) To enable students to work as freelance playwrights and scriptwriters in the theatre, film, radio and TV drama industries.

Postgraduate Certificate

Following successful completion of the Postgraduate Certificate in Creative Writing (Playwriting and Screenwriting) you will know how to conceive, structure, and write a short play or screenplay. You will have a critical understanding of the play and screenplay form. You will understand some
of the theories related to playwriting, screenwriting and storytelling, and be able to apply these to your own creative work.

Postgraduate Diploma
Following successful completion of the Postgraduate Diploma in Creative Writing (Playwriting and Screenwriting) in addition to the above you will know how to structure a full length play or screenplay, and have a basic understanding of how the playwriting and screenwriting industries function.

MA
Following successful completion of the MA in Creative Writing (Playwriting and Screenwriting), in addition to all of the above you will be able to write a full length play or screenplay suitable for submission to a play, TV, or film producer. You will have an in depth understanding of how the playwriting and screenwriting industries function and an understanding of the legal and ethical issues affecting playwrights and screenwriters. You will know how to write a treatment, step outline, bible and script report. You will be able to analyse play texts and film scripts to a high standard.

WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?

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

Knowledge and understanding:

- An understanding of how to write a play and a feature film script from inception to submission to a producer
- An understanding of aspects of writing drama for TV and radio
- An ability to make well-founded independent judgements about classic and contemporary plays and scripts
- An understanding of dramatic form and genre
- An understanding of how playwrights and screenwriters work with other artists and industry professionals
- An understanding of the legal and ethical issues affecting playwrights and screenwriters

Skills:

- The ability to research a subject for the purposes of a play or script
- The ability to work with industry professionals
- The ability to analyse a play or script
- The ability to converse with well known writers
- The ability to structure a dramatic story
- The ability to create dramatic characters
- The ability to assess critically the writing of others
- The ability to write dialogue appropriate to the medium
- The ability to conceptualise
- The ability to write stage and camera directions
- The ability to meet deadlines
- The ability to develop a dramatic idea through several stages
- The ability to structure a plot in different ways
- The ability to describe and defend one's own work
The ability to write a treatment and other selling documents
The ability to conduct research
The ability to co-operate with actors

Values and attitudes:

- An ability to respond to and use constructive criticism
- An ability to comment on others' work with sensitivity and integrity
- An ability to stand by their own work in the face of unhelpful criticism
- Responsibility towards the ethical issues surrounding: plagiarism; using real people in fiction; using real events in fiction
- Flexibility in negotiating the demands of the industry and their own desires as writers

HOW WILL I LEARN?

Lectures; seminars; presentations; set exercises; workshops; guided reading and/or viewing; one-to-one tutorials.

The programme has been designed, with input from a range of playwrights and screenwriters, to provide the optimum environment for students to complete a full length play or feature film script to a high standard.

In the first part of the programme, students will explore the possibilities of writing for theatre and film in a series of seminars, exercises and workshops.

In the first term, the emphasis will be on plays, and the core elements of dramatic writing: storytelling; action; creation of character; dialogue; use of time, space and image; structure; and stage. Emphasis will be placed on students' imaginative use of the form. Students will write a ten minute play.

In the second term, the emphasis will be on film, and on writing in a professional context. They will learn to develop a film script using industry terms and techniques including pitching, writing treatments and scene outlines, employing camera directions, and working with, and against, genre. Students will write a ten minute film.

In the third term, students will participate in a series of workshops on writing TV and radio drama and you will hear your first term short plays read by actors and experience the rewriting process.

From the beginning of the programme, students will also participate in a series of seminars designed to develop their understanding of classic and contemporary plays and scripts, particularly in terms of genre and form. Students will develop an ability to review plays and films and to explore the compositional choices the writer has made via writing exercises. They also will develop their understanding of the work of playwrights and screenwriters through interaction with visiting writers. Students will be able to develop through research an interest in a particular writer or topic in playwriting or screenwriting relevant to their own work. You will also study the nature and theories of storytelling throughout terms one and two in a series of lectures.

In term three students will start to concentrate on their own full length play or feature film script with support from tutorials and workshops. This work will continue until the end of the programme.

Students will also be introduced to aspects of working in the theatre, film, radio and TV drama industries via lectures from visiting speakers. As part of this course, they will carry out assignments which will prepare them to work as freelance playwrights and/or screenwriters.
WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?

Assessment and Assessment Criteria

Participation in lectures, seminars and workshops; of work on presentations; set exercises and own script proposal.

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 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

Assessment Regulations

In order to pass your Programme, you should complete successfully or be exempted from the relevant modules and assessments and will therefore acquire the required number of credits.

The Pass mark for each module is 50%.

If you fail an assessment component or a module, the following will apply:

1. Compensation: where you fail up to a total of 20 credits at first or resit attempt (15 for a Postgraduate Certificate), you may be allowed compensation if:
   - Compensation is permitted for the module involved (see the module specification), and
   - It can be demonstrated that you have satisfied all the Learning Outcomes of the modules in the Programme, and
   - A minimum overall mark of 10 percentage points below the pass mark has been achieved in the module to be compensated, and
   - An aggregate mark of 50% has been achieved overall.

If you receive a compensated pass in a module you shall be awarded the credit for that module. The original component marks shall be retained in the record of marks and the greater of the original module mark and the minimum pass mark for the module shall be used for the purpose of calculation towards the Award.

2. Resit: you will normally be offered one resit attempt. However, if you did not participate in the first assessment and have no extenuating circumstances, you may not be offered a resit.
If you are successful in the resit, you shall be awarded the credit for that module. The mark used for the purpose of calculation towards your Award shall be calculated from the original marks for the component(s) that you passed at first attempt and the minimum pass mark for the component(s) for which you took a resit.

If you do not satisfy your resit by the date specified you will not progress and the Assessment Board shall require that you withdraw from the Programme.

If you fail to meet the requirements for the Programme, but satisfy the requirements for a lower-level Award, then a lower qualification may be awarded as per the table below. If you fail to meet the requirements for the Programme and are not eligible for the award of a lower level qualification, the Assessment Board shall require that you withdraw from the Programme.

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

**WHAT AWARD CAN I GET?**

**Master’s Degree:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HE Level</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Weighting (%)</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>% required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taught</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>With Distinction</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>With Merit</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>With Pass</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Postgraduate Diploma:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HE Level</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Weighting (%)</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>% required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taught</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>With Distinction</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>With Merit</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>With Pass</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Postgraduate Certificate:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HE Level</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Weighting (%)</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>% required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taught</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>With Distinction</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>With Merit</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>With Pass</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHAT WILL I STUDY?**

In order to exit the MA Programme with a Postgraduate Certificate, students must have completed 60 credits.

In order to exit the MA Programme with a Postgraduate Diploma, students must have completed 120 credits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module Title</th>
<th>SITS Code</th>
<th>Module Credits</th>
<th>Core/Elective</th>
<th>Can be Compensated?</th>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Storytelling</td>
<td>CWM935</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic Writing</td>
<td>CWM905</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TO WHAT KIND OF CAREER MIGHT I GO ON?

We would expect our students to approach agents with a view to representation as playwrights or screenwriters. Alumni are currently represented by all the major London agencies. Many alumni have had plays produced and some have also formed theatre companies. A number of alumni have had television episodes produced or are working in television. A number of alumni have had films produced or have ongoing film script development deals.

The alumni who have had work produced can be found at [http://www.city.ac.uk/creative-writing/news](http://www.city.ac.uk/creative-writing/news).

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](http://www.city.ac.uk/careers/for-students-and-recent-graduates).

HOW DO I ENTER THE PROGRAMME?

Applicants will normally have a UK Honours degree (in any subject) or the overseas equivalent. But successful completion of a certificate-level writing course, or a professional qualification, or relevant experience may also be acceptable.

All candidates must demonstrate a commitment to, and ability in, writing fiction. Candidates will need to submit 5,000 words of fiction/nonfiction or 20 pages of a play or script and attend an interview. In exceptional circumstances the interview may be conducted by telephone.