

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This revised document describes the **Master of Arts in Modernism and Contemporary Literature**. This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2013**.

The aims of the programme are:

- to develop an advanced understanding of twentieth- and twenty-first-century literature in terms of the two constituent areas of the degree (Modernism and the Contemporary);
- to develop advanced skills in literary study;
- to provide training in research techniques in the field of study;
- to foster independent learning abilities;
- to develop key communications, IT and management skills relevant for postgraduate work

The programme is delivered over one year of full-time study (52 weeks) or two years of part-time study (104 weeks). On successful completion of the programme a student should have an understanding of the area of the MA at a level appropriate for a postgraduate qualification. Whilst being a self-contained degree in its own right, the programme provides suitable and recognised qualifications for entry to a PhD course in the fields covered by the degree.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff. In general terms, the programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

- advanced understanding of major developments in literature in English during the period between 1890 and the present day, in the context of twentieth-century and contemporary history;
- advanced understanding of the nature and formation of notions of modernism;
- advanced understanding of the contemporary;
- the relation of those notions to issues such as aesthetics, genre, and the politics of writing;
- the evaluation of relevant critical, theoretical and contextual research at the forefront of the specific fields involved in the degree;
- the articulation and deployment of knowledge and understanding of texts, concepts and theories relating to the chosen fields;

- independent literary research at an advanced level;
- the use of traditional and electronic resources in pursuit of that research.

Skills and other attributes

- the ability to analyse and critically interpret text and data;*
- to further develop skills in information handling and retrieval;*
- the ability to conduct research independently at an advanced level using traditional and electronic resources;*
- to further develop skills of reflection on reading and learning;*
- the ability to articulate knowledge and the understanding of texts, concepts and theories relating to English literature at an advanced level, demonstrating self-direction and originality;
- the ability to present logical and coherent written and oral arguments of varying lengths;*
- the ability to comprehend and develop sophisticated concepts and original critical ideas;*
- confidence in deploying the appropriate critical skills as required in the specific field of study;
- interpersonal skills, involving recognising and respecting the viewpoints, and interacting constructively with other people;*
- time management and organisational skills including working to deadlines, prioritising tasks, organising work-time;*
- in addition, the programme fosters the development of a range of personal attributes that are important in the world of work, and that strengthen postgraduates' abilities to engage in lifelong learning and contribute to the wider community. These include: personal motivation; the ability to work autonomously and with others; self-awareness and self-management; flexibility, adaptability and creativity.*

* transferable skills

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Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning is mainly by 2 hour seminars during the Autumn and Spring Terms. Seminars provide students with the opportunity to focus intensively upon particular aspects of modernist and contemporary literature and theory, and to discuss textual interpretations as well as more general, historical or theoretical issues linking different texts on the course. Preparation will be assigned by the tutor, including presentations which will require students to research issues and present conclusions or raise questions for further discussion in an organised fashion, and to defend or develop arguments in response to points made in the seminar. The research training will teach good scholarly practice and research skills, which will be applied in term papers and dissertation. Students are normally required to write one term-paper per term for each course they take, and are offered supervision on those essays (up to a maximum of 1 hour). They will subsequently receive individual feedback on their particular problems and strengths in relation to the term papers, and in relation to the drafting of their dissertation. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the [Department](#).

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Details of the programme structure(s)

Full-time structure

The programme lasts 52 weeks, beginning in September. The programme comprises four core courses and a dissertation:

- i. EN5331 Modernism, Modernity & History (30 Credits)
- ii. EN5314 Contemporary Literature (30 Credits)
- iii. EN5315 Modernist Special Topics (30 Credits)
- iv. EN5316 Contemporary Special Topics (30 Credits)
- v. EN5330 Dissertation (60 credits)

In addition, students are required to attend the research methods training provided during the Autumn Term: this training is designed to inform students about Library and computing resources and to introduce some of the skills required for graduate work. Students are also expected to attend the Department's Research Seminars, and are encouraged to attend other relevant seminars held at the CES, IUSS and elsewhere in central London. There will also be two dissertation training sessions in term 3.

Part-Time Structure

The programme lasts 104 weeks, beginning in September for part-time students. Part-time students normally take a core and the associated Specialist Topic in each year. Thus, Year 1 could be **either** EN5331 Modernism, Modernity and History with EN5315 Modernist Special Topics **or** EN5314 Contemporary Literature and EN5316 Contemporary Special Topics, but we would strongly recommend students to start with the Modernist core and then take the Contemporary core in Year 2.

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Progression and award requirements

Progression throughout the year/s is monitored through performance in oral presentations, contributions to seminar discussion and coursework. To pass the programme a student must achieve an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. Failure marks between 40-49% can be condoned in courses which do not constitute more than 25% of the final assessment, provided that the overall weighted average is at least 50.00%, but a failure mark (i.e. below 50%) in the dissertation cannot be condoned.

The **Masters** degree with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 60.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The **Masters** degree with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. A Distinction will not normally be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any element of the programme. In exceptional circumstances a viva may be held for a student at the request of the Examiners.

The **Postgraduate Diploma** may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any taught element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50% *and* has either chosen not to proceed to the dissertation, or has failed the dissertation on either the first or second attempt. Failure marks in the region 40-49% are not usually condoned for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, but if they are, such condoned fails would be in courses which do not constitute more than 30 credits.

The Postgraduate Diploma with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 60.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. A Distinction will not normally be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any element of the programme. In exceptional circumstances a viva may be held for a student at the request of the Examiners.

The **Postgraduate Certificate** may be awarded if a student achieves a mark of at least 50% in 60 credits of the programme, *and* has either chosen not to complete the programmes, or has failed to meet the requirements for the award of Postgraduate Diploma or Masters.

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Student support and guidance

- The Programme Director meets with the students on a regular basis to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues.
- Course coordinators, tutors and dissertation supervisors provide a back-up system of academic, pastoral and welfare advice.
- Induction programmes for orientation and introduction to the Department and College by the Director of Graduate Studies.
- Representation on the Student-Staff Committee.
- All staff available and accessible through an office-hour system.
- Detailed MA handbook and course booklets.

- Extensive supporting materials and learning resources in College and University libraries.
- Computing equipment at Bedford Square.
- Dedicated Departmental computing facilities and study room in Egham.
- College Careers Service and Departmental Careers Service liaison officer.
- Access to all College and University support services, including Student Counselling Service, Health Centre and the Educational Support Office for students with special needs.
- Membership of the Institute of English Studies; access to further research training seminars and courses.

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Admission requirements

Admission is normally based on at least an Upper Second in Single Honours English or in a related degree. An equivalent level of achievement is looked for in applications from overseas candidates. All students are asked to submit samples of written work. Non-standard applicants from disciplines other than English are considered on their merits, but ability to follow the course depends on a degree of familiarity both with the texts of twentieth-century literature and with the practices of literary study. Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. For further details please refer to the [Prospective Students](#) web page. It may also be helpful to contact the [Admissions Office](#) for specific guidance on the entrance requirements for particular programmes.

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Further learning and career opportunities

Graduates from English MA programmes have successfully progressed into a wide range of professions which include journalism, publishing and the media, advertising and marketing, the creative industry, the public sector, and teaching. For other graduates, completing an MA is the precursor to embarking on research, ultimately leading to a PhD. For more details on further learning and career opportunities please refer to the [Careers Service](#).

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Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The new scoring system for the RAE 2008 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour. 60% of the College's research profile is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent outperforming the national average of 50%. The College is ranked 16th in the UK for research of 4* standard and 18th for 3* and 4* research. All staff in the English Department are highly regarded scholars, writers and critics and the quality of our research was recognised in the most recent Research Assessment Exercise, where ninety percent of our research was found to be of international quality. We also host the national English Subject centre, which drives innovation and improvement in teaching and learning across English studies.

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List of programmes with details of awards, teaching arrangements and accreditation

All the programmes are taught entirely by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and lead to awards of the University of London. Programmes in English are not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The Banner programme code is given in parentheses.

Master of Arts Programme in Modernism and Contemporary Literature

MA in Modernism and Contemporary Literature (2618)

Postgraduate Diploma and Certificate Programmes in Modernism and Contemporary Literature

Postgraduate Diploma in Modernism and Contemporary Literature (2619)

Postgraduate Certificate in Modernism and Contemporary Literature (2620)

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