

Programme Specification

Awarding Body/Institution	Queen Mary, University of London
Teaching Institution	Queen Mary, University of London
Name of Final Award and Programme Title	MA in English Studies
Duration of Study / Period of Registration	1 calendar year (full time) 2 calendar years (part time)
QM Programme Code / UCAS Code(s)	
QAA Benchmark Group	Not applicable
FHEQ Level of Award	Level 7
Programme Accredited by	N/A
Date Programme Specification Approved	
Responsible School / Institute	School of English & Drama

Schools also involved in teaching part of the programme

Programme Rationale

The MA in English Studies draws on the established research strengths of the Department of English and offers a wide range of modules taught by research specialists in the field. It allows for a broader coverage of literary genres and periods, and by so doing it complements other MA programmes in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (such as the MA in London Studies). It enhances student learning by increasing module choice and aims to improve the graduate student experience through robust and effective academic management. This is an 'umbrella' programme, with a single point of entry leading to clearly defined pathways through the degree. Students who prefer a flexible route can choose modules from across the range of the curriculum, allowing them to consider the relationship between writings from a variety of historical periods and genres, and to write a supervised dissertation in an area of their choice. Students who prefer to specialize choose one of the defined pathways, gain an understanding of the movements, debates, and literary practices that shaped a particular period or genre, and write a supervised dissertation in a related area. The flexibility of the programme makes it appropriate for students who plan to go on to doctoral research, who want to develop and enhance their careers through the experience of research and the acquisition of transferable skills, or who wish to pursue their existing literary interests at a more advanced level. It provides extensive opportunities in the Department and Faculty for part-time study at Masters level.

Educational Aims of the Programme

- to introduce students to research methods and resources for the advanced study of literature, and to current theoretical and critical approaches to literature, in order to develop skills and knowledge appropriate to Master's level
- to enable students to develop period-specific knowledge and skills in preparation for doctoral research through the provision of specialized and coherent pathways
- at the same time, through the provision of a flexible curriculum to enable students to gain an enhanced understanding of the study of literature relevant to a teaching career, and to improve their competence in transferable skills valued in the market place

- to build and enhance students' independent research, presentation, and essay writing skills through seminar participation, module assessment, and the writing of a supervised research dissertation
- to extend access to high-quality MA teaching by putting in place appropriate and effective arrangements for part-time study

Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills and other attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes are referenced to the relevant QAA benchmark statement(s) (see above) and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2008), and relate to the typical student. Additionally, the SEEC Credit Level Descriptors for Further and Higher Education 2003 and Queen Mary Statement of Graduate Attributes have been used as a guiding framework for curriculum design.

Knowledge and understanding of:

A 1	The disciplinary conventions of English studies, and a critical awareness of theoretical debate in the field.
A 2	A range of scholarly approaches to the analysis and interpretation of literary texts, and an awareness of what is at stake in these differences of approach.
A 3	A particular subject area or field of literature (for example, a specific period, genre, or author) in greater depth than previously encountered in university study.

Intellectual skills - able to:

B 1	Apply research-based knowledge in line with current scholarship.
B 2	Sort complex written and/or visual evidence from a variety of original sources, and critically evaluate the reliability of these different sources of information.
B 3	Produce close as well as contextualized readings of a variety of texts and artefacts.

Transferable skills - able to:

C 1	Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act independently in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.
C 2	Construct clear and persuasive arguments sufficient to sustain appropriately complex answers to the problems encountered in the course of their studies.
C 3	Show advanced competence in the use of learning resources as aids to research and observe the requirements for the professional presentation of their work.
C 4	Demonstrate advanced proficiency in writing and speech, showing the ability to select an appropriate style and register, and to apply different forms of communication in a variety of cultural, professional, and workplace settings.

Practical skills - able to:

D 1	Recognise the ethical issues involved in the use and attribution of knowledge belonging to a global community of scholars.
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D2	Reflect self critically on their progress in both written and oral work, allowing for a continual improvement in knowledge and understanding, and the development of new skills at a high level.
D3	Exercise initiative and personal responsibility in decision making, while at the same time showing a readiness to act inclusively, and to work collaboratively, in a context of conflicting opinions.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies

Teaching will be provided in weekly seminars (usually with a maximum of twelve students). Seminars will be led by staff members with research qualifications and interests in the area. Students will be invited to discuss key issues, including theoretical approaches and interpretative procedures, and to assume an active role in shaping the direction and scope of the discussion. Participation will also be encouraged through seminar presentations, group research, and by the creation of a supportive, attentive, and considerate environment conducive to the exchange of ideas. Seminars will be supplemented by consultations with module convenors, dissertation supervisors, and academic advisers, which will include opportunities for one-to-one discussions of course content, and plans for written work. In addition there will be guided visits to libraries and other archives. Students will be expected to engage in private study in preparation for the seminars and in the production of essays and the dissertation. Each module is supported by a detailed reading list and by other learning materials housed in its on-line learning environment areas.

The dissertation supervisor will be allocated in the light of the student's outline topic proposal, which is formulated during semester two in consultation with the adviser (with input as needed from module convenors). The supervisor will have expertise in the area of the student's proposed topic, and will help the student refine and develop his or her plans. Supervision may include discussion of methodology, research resources, the scope of appropriate reading, the conduct and structure of the argument, the quality of submitted drafts and bibliographical procedures. Supervision will be provided in an initial, individual planning meeting, followed by a series of four one-to-one meetings. The dissertation is a maximum of 15,000 words.

The compulsory and elective modules are assessed by written essays of 4,000 words. Students will be able to formulate their own essay topics in consultation with the module convenor who will provide guidance on the planning and development of essays in one-to-one sessions during the second part of the semester.

Written reports on all written work (both essays and dissertations) will be provided by first and second markers. All written work will be returned to students individually by the module convenor or the supervisor in feedback sessions. In order to provide written and oral feedback in good time, essays will be returned with provisional marks before the numerical grade has been formally approved by the external examiners.

Programme Structure(s) and Requirements, Levels and Modules

In accordance with the Academic Credit Framework, candidates for the MA in English Studies take modules (including a Dissertation) with a total credit value of 180 at level 7.

There are seven pathways through the programme, each defined by one or more compulsory modules, as follows:

Pathway 1: English Literature

Compulsory modules: The Production of Texts in Context; Resources for Research; Dissertation

This pathway offers a flexible route through the programme allowing students to pursue a wide range of topics. The compulsory module, 'The Production of Texts in Context', provides an advanced understanding of the material and social conditions in which texts are produced, disseminated, and read by investigating a range of case studies. It also provides students with a sound historical and conceptual preparation for the study of literary texts at postgraduate level. Students select three optional modules from the whole range of modules offered by the Department and complete a dissertation on an approved topic of their choice. Research training is provided by the 'Resources for Research' module.

Part-time students: first year students take The Production of Texts in Context, Resources for Research and one elective module in semester 2; second year students take two elective modules plus the dissertation.

Pathway 2: Early Modern Studies, 1300-1700

Compulsory modules: Early Modern Contexts; Early Modern Archival Skills; Early Modern Studies: Research Preparation; Dissertation

This pathway gives students the opportunity to explore the vibrant culture that existed in Europe from 1300-1700. The linked compulsory modules, 'Early Modern Contexts' and 'Early Modern Studies: Research Preparation', introduce students to different

methodological approaches to Early Modern studies - including the historiography of the period, the importance of national contexts and traditions, the impact of print culture, the theory of iconography, and the development of scientific practice - before testing them against particular texts. Students select two optional modules (one of which may be from outside the pathway), and complete a dissertation on an approved topic of their choice. Periodspecific research training is offered by the 'Early Modern Archival Skills' module.

Part-time students: first year students take Early Modern Contexts and EITHER Early Modern Studies: Research Preparation, OR one elective module in semester 2; second year students take the dissertation and EITHER Early Modern Studies: Research Preparation and one elective module, OR two elective modules

Pathway 3: Eighteenth-Century Literature and Romanticism

Compulsory modules: Ideas and Metaphors; London Panoramas; Resources for Research; Dissertation

This pathway takes a truly interdisciplinary approach, and explores the history of genres, philosophy, politics, history, and visual culture, amongst other topics. The compulsory module, 'Ideas and Metaphors', offers a rigorous grounding in the themes, methods, arguments, and contexts needed to understand and interpret eighteenth-century and Romantic literature. Through focused discussion of one or two ideas or metaphors that characterize and structure the literature and thought of the period, students will assess the use and understanding of various terms such as 'wit', 'candour', 'commerce' and 'sublimity', looking carefully at their shifting meanings, contested values, and historical development, as well as at their representation in literary and non-literary writing. Students select three optional modules from a range of choices (one of which may be from outside the pathway), and complete a dissertation on an approved topic of their choice. Research training is provided by the period specific 'London Panoramas' and the general 'Resources for Research'.

Part-time students: first year students take Ideas and Metaphors, London Panoramas, Resources for Research; and one elective module in semester 2; second year students take two elective modules and the dissertation.

Pathway 4: Victorian Literature

Compulsory modules: Victorian Voices; Resources for Research; Dissertation

This pathway provides an opportunity to explore a wide range of literature written in Britain between 1832 and 1900. The compulsory module, 'Victorian Voices', introduces students to a range of Victorian literary representations of identity. The module draws on canonical and non-canonical poetry and prose to explore ways of expressing core aspects of self while also considering the implications of audience and contexts. Students select three optional modules (one of which may be from outside the pathway), and complete a dissertation on an approved topic of their choice. Research training is provided by the 'Resources for Research' module.

Part-time students: first year students take Victorian Voices, Resources for Research; and one elective module in semester 2; second year students take two elective modules and the dissertation.

Pathway 5: Writing in the Modern Age

Compulsory modules: Modernism and After; Resources for Research; Researching Modern Culture; Dissertation

This pathway offers a historically wide-ranging, theoretically rigorous, and generically diverse grounding in twentieth-century literary culture. The compulsory module, 'Modernism and After', examines the key terms 'modernity' and 'modernism' from conceptual, aesthetic, and historical perspectives, while also exploring the relation of modernist writing to postcoloniality and to postwar literature. Students engage with a variety of literary and non-literary modes, encompassing narrative fiction, poetry, and critical theory. Students select three optional modules (one of which may be from outside the pathway), and complete a dissertation on an approved topic of their choice. Research training is provided by the period-specific 'Researching Modern Culture' and the general 'Resources for Research'.

Part-time students: first year students take Modernism and After; Resources for Research; Researching Modern Culture; and one elective module in semester 2; second year students take two elective modules and the dissertation.

Pathway 6: Contemporary Writing

Compulsory Modules: Writing and the Present; Resources for Research; Researching Modern Culture; Dissertation

This pathway brings together a variety of genres and critical approaches to contemporary literature, offering the opportunity to explore fiction, poetry, and life writing, as well as debates in cultural theory and philosophy about the very nature and periodization of contemporaneity. The compulsory module, 'Writing and the Present', focuses on notions of 'writing' and the 'present' in relation to broad contemporary debates about the historical present, the nature of time, and the difficulties of periodization. Special attention is devoted to questions of technology, innovation, and social change that bring into question the category of writing itself, explore its role in current theoretical debates, its place in contemporary philosophy, and its transformations in the context of digital culture. Students select three optional modules (one of which may be from outside the pathway), and complete a dissertation on an approved topic of their choice. Research training is provided by the period specific 'Researching Modern Culture' and the general 'Resources for Research'.

Part-time students: first year students take Writing and the Present; Resources for Research; Researching Modern Culture; and

one elective module in semester 2; second year students take two elective modules and the dissertation.

Pathway 7: Postcolonial and Global Literatures

Compulsory modules: Peripheral Modernities; Resources for Research; Researching Modern Culture; Dissertation

This pathway explores writing from the classic to the contemporary, in English and in translation, that reflects on questions of global relatedness and colonial power. The compulsory module 'Peripheral Modernities' offers a thorough grounding in concepts of modernity, globalisation, and culture as viewed from the global peripheries. The module asks students to consider how we should theorise and understand these peripheries. Students select three optional modules (one of which may be from outside the pathway), and complete a dissertation on an approved topic of their choice. Research training is provided by the period specific 'Researching Modern Culture' and the general 'Resources for Research'.

Part-time students: first year students take Peripheral Modernities; Resources for Research; Researching Modern Culture; and one elective module in semester 2; second year students take two elective modules and the dissertation.

The list of elective modules expands and changes as new modules are proposed or amended and approved through the Queen Mary Quality Assurance processes. Students may choose up to a maximum of 30 credits of cognate elective modules offered by Schools in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (subject to approval by their adviser) and from cognate intercollegiate elective modules offered by Colleges of the University of London (subject to approval by their adviser and the Head of the Department of English).

	Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester
X							

Criteria for Admission to the Programme

First degree (UK): A good 2:1 (that is, an average of 65 or higher) in English Literature or a cognate Humanities discipline (for example, Drama, History, Philosophy).

North America: minimum grade point average of 3.5.

IELTS: A minimum overall score of 7.5, with at least 7.0 in Writing.

TOEFL (paper based): A score of at least 625.

Quality Assurance Mechanism

Include details of: SSLC meetings, student feedback mechanisms, personal tutor arrangements, programme induction, programme review and monitoring.

Student-Staff Liaison Committee and student feedback:

MA students have two representatives on the department's Student-Staff Liaison Committee, which is chaired by the Head of English, where they are able to raise questions and concerns about aspects of programme management. Current MA students were involved at an early stage in the development of this programme and their comments were taken into account when defining the pathways and programme title. All modules are evaluated by written student questionnaires, which are monitored by the Head of English. Convenors are required to respond to student feedback in their module reviews.

Advisers and induction:

Students will attend the School's induction programme for Master's students. This will include a pathway-specific induction with the convenor, a one-to-one meeting with the student's adviser to discuss the the student's choice of options. Students will be assigned to their advisers at induction. They will meet at the beginning of each semester to discuss practical and academic issues (including dissertation plans) to set goals. Other meetings will be arranged for week 6 (to discuss module essay plans). A record of these meetings will be kept in the student's file.

Programme management:

The Programme is managed by a Programmes Committee, chaired by the Director of Graduate Taught Programmes, and supported by a member of the School of English and Drama's administrative staff. The membership includes the pathway convenors and the Chair of the Postgraduate Subject Examination Board. It reports to the English Teaching and Student Support Committee and to the Department Board.

The Programmes Committee has overall responsibility for

- ensuring the academic coherence and quality of the programme, within the framework of the Academic Regulations
- organizing the timetable and considering proposals for new pathways and modules, and other planning initiatives
- monitoring recruitment and resources
- devising action plans in response to feedback from student module evaluations and the PTES
- coordinating examination procedures for the programme
- ensuring that the programme is publicized effectively, through the School's website, through the postgraduate prospectus, and through other printed publicity materials and promotional activities
- overseeing annual module review in the light of external examiners' reports
- contributing to the Annual Review of Postgraduate Programmes

The pathway convenors have responsibility for:

- allocating dissertation supervisors to students taking the pathway
- assisting the Director of Postgraduate Taught Programmes/PG SEB Chair in organizing the assessment procedures for the pathway, advising on the allocation of first and second markers for assessed work, and where relevant responding to external examiners' reports'

Programme-specific Assessment Regulations (if applicable)

In the case of programmes that deviate / do not comply with the Academic Regulations further information regarding the nature of any difference and/or deviation should be stipulated in detail.

Not applicable.

Employers Links

Please provide details of any links with employers e.g.

- Details of advisory panels that include current or potential employers;
- Organisations that regularly employ graduates from this programme and the roles that graduates undertake.
- Student prizes donated by organisations that may offer employment to graduates from this programme.

If there are no links with employers consider the learning outcomes and transferable skills and explain how these might be used to inform employers about the qualities and skills a graduate from this programme might be expected to have.

The MA in English Studies provides a grounding in research methodologies and practices for students who intended to progress to doctoral work, an enhanced understanding of the study of literature relevant to students who intended to follow a teaching career, and improved competence in transferable skills valued more generally in the market place, including the analysis of complex evidence, the oral and written presentation of arguments and information, and effective time-management. Employer feedback has particularly valued the research skills and high level of critical thinking acquired by graduates from the MA and the contribution these make to the problem-solving abilities required of those who work at senior levels in complex organizations.

Programme Specification Approval

Person completing Programme Specification

Dr Alfred Hiatt

Person responsible for management of programme

Dr Alfred Hiatt

**Date Programme Specification produced/amended
by School or teaching and learning committee**

28 January 2015

**Date Programme Specification approved by
Programme and Module approval Board**