

Royal Holloway, University of London
Course specification for an undergraduate award
BA Comparative Literature and Culture and Philosophy (QV25)

Section 1 – Introduction to your course

This course specification is a formal document, which provides a summary of the main features of your course and the learning outcomes that you might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if you take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, and in various handbooks, all of which you will be able to access online. Alternatively, further information on the College's academic regulations and policies can be found [here](#). Further information on the College's Admissions Policy can be found [here](#).

Your degree course in Comparative Literature and Culture is delivered in three stages, each of which comprises one year of full-time study during which you must follow modules to the value of 120 credits. The courses provide progressive structures in which you are able to gain ever-wider knowledge and understanding, and appropriate skills. The courses contain a combination of mandatory modules and optional modules. The mandatory modules introduce you to the principal literary genres, the core techniques and methodologies of comparatism, and contemporary critical and theoretical approaches, through a range of media and modes of cultural production taken from a variety of historical and geographical contexts. The optional modules, taken from those on offer to other students in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, will complement the core teaching by providing a more detailed knowledge of specific literary and cultural figures, themes and movements. The structure encourages you, in stages two and three, to develop your own interests through informed choice among specialist options on offer in the Department.

While Royal Holloway keeps all the information made available under review, courses and the availability of individual modules, especially optional modules are necessarily subject to change at any time, and you are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect your decision to follow a specific course. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform you as soon as is practicable of any significant changes which might affect your studies.

The following is a brief description for some of the most important terminology for understanding the content of this document:

Degree course – May also be referred to as 'degree programme' or simply 'programme', these terms refer to the qualification you will be awarded upon successful completion of your studies.

Module – May also be referred to as 'course', this refers to the individual units you will study each year to complete your degree course. Undergraduate degrees at Royal Holloway comprise a combination of modules in multiples of 15 credits to the value of 120 credits per year. On some degree courses a certain number of optional modules must be passed for a particular degree title.

Section 2 – Course details			
Date of specification update	November 2023	Location of study	Egham Campus
Course award and title	BA Comparative Literature and Culture and Philosophy	Level of study	Undergraduate
Course code	2431	UCAS code	QV25
Year of entry	2024/25		
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department or school	Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures	Other departments or schools involved in teaching the course	N/A
Mode(s) of attendance	Full-time	Duration of the course	Three years
Accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirement(s)	N/A		
Link to Coursefinder for further information:	https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/	For queries on admissions:	https://royalholloway.ac.uk/applicationquery

Section 3 – Degree course structure					
3.1 Mandatory module information					
The following table summarises the mandatory modules which students must take in each year of study					
Year	Module code	Module title	Credits	FHEQ level	Module status (Mandatory Condonable MC or Mandatory Non-Condonable MNC)
1	ML1203	CLC: Reading Texts: criticism for Comparative Literature	30	4	MC
1	ML1204	CLC: Tales of the City: Introduction to Thematic Analysis	15	4	MC
1	PY1002	Philosophy: Introduction to Modern Philosophy	15	4	MC
1	PY1101	Philosophy: Problems of Knowledge	15	4	MNC
1	PY1541	Philosophy: Introduction to Ancient Philosophy	15	4	MC
1	PY1202	Philosophical Methods	15	4	MC
2	ML2206	CLC: Histories of Representation	15	5	MC
2	ML2207	CLC: Critical and Comparative Approaches	15	5	MC
<p>This table sets out the most important information for the mandatory modules on your degree course. These modules are central to achieving your learning outcomes, so they are compulsory, and all students on your degree course will be required to take them. You will be automatically registered for these modules each year. Mandatory modules fall into two categories: 'condonable' or 'non-condonable'.</p> <p>In the case of mandatory 'non-condonable' (MNC) modules, you must pass the module before you can proceed to the next year of your course, or to successfully graduate with a particular degree title. In the case of mandatory 'condonable' (MC) modules, these must be taken but you can still progress or graduate even if you do not pass them. Please note that although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, changes to your degree course may be made where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events. For example: where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of external advisors, to enhance academic provision.</p>					
3.2 Optional modules					

In addition to mandatory modules, there will be a number of optional modules available during the course of your degree. Although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, new options may be offered or existing ones may be withdrawn. For example where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of External Advisors, to enhance academic provision. There may be additional requirements around option selection; please contact the Department for further information.

In **stage one**, you must take an option to the value of 15 credits from a range of stage one modules as listed on the Department website and course handbook plus specified modules in the other subject.

In **stage two**, you must also take modules to the value of 30 credits from a range of Stage Two modern languages comparative modules plus:

For **Philosophy**, in Second Year, students must choose at least 30 credits from the following options basket:

PY2001 Kant (15 credits)

PY2002 Mind and World (15 credits)

PY2202 Empiricism and Rationalism (15 credits)

PY2900 Race, Gender and Queer Philosophy (15 credits)

And their remaining Philosophy credits from a list of other options.

In **stage three**, you must take modules to the value of 30 credits from Stage Three modules offered by the Department and specified modules in the other subject.

You are not permitted to write more than two SMLLC dissertations.

If PY3001 Philosophy Dissertation is chosen, the remaining 30 credits must be taken from PY-coded options.

Section 4 - Progressing through each year of your degree course

For further information on the progression and award requirements for your degree, please refer to Royal Holloway's [Academic Regulations](#).

Progression throughout the year/s is monitored through performance in summative or formative coursework assignments. Please note that if you hold a Student Visa and you choose to leave (or are required to leave because of non-progression) or complete early (before the course end date stated on your CAS), then this will be reported to UKVI.

All first year students on single, joint or combined honours courses offered all or in part by the School of Humanities, School of Performing and Digital Arts, or department of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy are required to pass a Moodle-based writing skills quiz in order to progress into the second year of study. The pass mark for the test is 60%.

Certificates of Distinction are awarded to students who achieve at least 80% in the quiz. Students may attempt the quiz as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who meet the requirements for progression as stipulated in the [College's Undergraduate Regulations](#) (Section: Conditions for progression to the next stage) but fail to pass the Moodle-based quiz will not be permitted to progress into their second year of academic study at the College.

Section 5 – Educational aims of the course

The aims of this course are:

- to provide students with a knowledge of transnational literatures and cultures, through materials ranging from the literary to the cinematic, visual, theoretical and philosophical, without requiring specialist knowledge of any language other than English;
- to equip students with a solid grasp of the analytical tools and methods required to understand and interpret texts from a range of cultures, genres, media and periods;
- to engage students imaginatively in the process of reading and analysing literary texts and other cultural products, while enabling them to develop independent critical thinking and judgement;
- to develop students' understanding of the issues involved in comparative and interdisciplinary analysis; to develop and consolidate key transferable skills of critical analysis, written and oral expression, and the ability to understand, critically engage with and compare a range of materials from different cultures, periods, media and genres;

Section 6 - Course learning outcomes

In general terms, the courses provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. (*Categories – Knowledge and understanding (K), Skills and other attributes (S), and Transferable skills (*)*)

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Theoretical knowledge and practical experience of the skills, methodologies and theories of comparative literary and cultural analysis (K); 2. A broad knowledge of transnational literature and culture, including both culture-specific and transnational issues; familiarity with, and an understanding of, the principal literary genres (fiction, poetry and drama) and other modes of cultural production (film, visual arts, philosophy, music) (K); 3. Awareness and understanding of a range of contemporary critical and theoretical approaches to literature and culture (K); 4. Knowledge of a range of relevant linguistic, literary, cultural and socio-historical contexts in which cultural products are produced and consumed, and the relations between these contexts and others (K); 5. Awareness and understanding of the various relationships and interfaces between literature, culture and other disciplines (K); 6. Critical skills in close reading, the analysis and critical interpretation of written and visual materials, on a number of levels, as appropriate (S); 7. Command of the techniques of comparative analysis; and appropriate critical and theoretical techniques and terminology (S); 8. Sensitivity and responsiveness to a variety of modes of cultural production (particularly literary, theatrical, cinematic, but others too where appropriate) and their generic conventions (S); 9. The ability to conduct research independently using traditional and electronic resources, and develop habits of reflection on study, reading, learning and research (S*); 10. The ability to work autonomously, manage time effectively and write and think under pressure (S*); 11. The capacity to assimilate and evaluate material of varying degrees of complexity, extract and synthesise key information and exercise critical reflection and judgement in the light of evidence and argument (S*); 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Advanced written and oral communication skills, including the ability to organise and present ideas within the framework of a structured and reasoned argument (S*); 13. The ability to organise and interpret complex information in a structured and systematic way, and to comprehend and develop sophisticated concepts (S*); 14. The capacity for independent thought and judgement, along with skills in critical reasoning (S*); 15. Mastery of the key critical discourses associated with the materials and subject-matter (S*); 16. Information technology skills (including word processing, email, WWW, information handling and retrieval), and the ability to engage with the textual use of new media, video, TV, DVD and electronic (S*); 17. Interpersonal skills, involving recognising and respecting the viewpoints of others (S*); 18. Time management and organisational skills including working to deadlines, prioritising tasks, organising work-time (S*); 19. The ability to appreciate cultural difference in an increasingly homogenised, globalised world (S*); 20. In addition, this course fosters the development of a range of personal attributes that are important in the world of work, and that strengthen graduates' abilities to engage in lifelong learning and contribute to the wider community. These include personal motivation; the ability to work autonomously and with others; sensitivity to cultural difference; self-awareness and self-management; empathy and insight; intellectual integrity; awareness of responsibility as a local, national and international citizen; interest in lifelong learning; flexibility and adaptability; creativity (S).
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Section 7 - Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning is mostly by means of lectures, structured seminars, and guided independent study. Assessment of knowledge and understanding is typically by formal examinations, coursework, oral presentations, exercises on Moodle, and by dissertations or long essays. Full details of the assessments for individual modules can be obtained from the Department's [website](#).

Contact hours come in various forms and may take the form of time spent with a member of staff in a lecture or seminar with other students. Contact hours may also be laboratory or, studio-based sessions, project supervision with a member of staff, or discussion through a virtual learning environment (VLE). These contact hours may be with a lecturer or teaching assistant, but they may also be with a technician, or specialist support staff.

The way in which each module on your degree course is assessed will also vary, however, the assessments listed above are all 'summative', which means you will receive a mark for it which will count towards your overall mark for the module, and potentially your degree classification, depending on your year of study. On successful completion of the module you will gain the credits listed. 'Coursework' might typically include a written assignment, like an essay. Coursework might also include a report, dissertation or portfolio. 'Practical assessments' might include an oral assessment or presentation, or a demonstration of practical skills required for the particular module

More detailed information on modules, including teaching and learning methods, and methods of assessment, can be found via the online [Module Catalogue](#). The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed regularly by the university, and may also be checked routinely by external agencies, such as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

Section 8 – Additional costs

There are no single associated costs greater than £50 per item on this degree course.

These estimated costs relate to studying this particular degree course at Royal Holloway. General costs such as accommodation, food, books and other learning materials and printing etc., have not been included, but further information is available on our website.

Section 9 – Indicators of quality and standards	
QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	4-6
Your course is designed in accordance with the FHEQ to ensure your qualification is awarded on the basis of nationally established standards of achievement, for both outcomes and attainment. The qualification descriptors within the FHEQ set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of individual qualifications. The qualification descriptors contained in the FHEQ exemplify the outcomes and attributes expected of learning that results in the award of higher education qualifications. These outcomes represent the integration of various learning experiences resulting from designated and coherent courses of study.	
QAA Subject benchmark statement(s)	http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of courses in a specific subject or subject area. They also represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in terms of the attributes and capabilities that those possessing qualifications should have demonstrated.	

Section 10– Intermediate exit awards (where available)		
You may be eligible for an intermediate exit award if you complete part of the course as detailed in this document. Any additional criteria (e.g. mandatory modules, credit requirements) for intermediate awards is outlined in the sections below.		
Award	Criteria	Awarding body
Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE)	Pass in 210 credits of which at least 90 must be at or above FHEQ Level 4 and at least 120 of which must be at or above FHEQ Level 5	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College
Certificate in Higher Education (CertHE)	Pass in 120 credits of which at least 90 must be at or above FHEQ Level 4	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College