

Royal Holloway, University of London

Course specification for a postgraduate award

MA CREATIVE WRITING (1073)

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 University prospectus, and in various handbooks, all of which you will be able to access online. Alternatively, further information on the University's academic regulations and policies can be found [here](#). Further information on the University's Admissions Policy can be found [here](#).

The Master's programme is delivered over one year of full-time study (52 weeks) or up to five years of part-time study (260 weeks). It is characterised by advanced training in the key areas of literary composition, by strong progression and by opportunities for specialisation to professional level or for transfer to higher research degrees (MPhil or PhD).

Your degree courses at Royal Holloway, University of London, will be delivered over one year, which normally involves modules to the value of 180 credits (which is equivalent to 90 ECTS credits¹).

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 – Also referred to as 'programme', this term refers to the qualification you will be awarded upon successful completion of your studies. 'Courses' were formerly known as 'programmes' at Royal Holloway.

Module – This refers to the credits you will study each year to complete your degree course. Postgraduate taught degrees at Royal Holloway comprise 180 credits. On some degree courses a certain number of optional modules must be passed for a particular degree title. 'Modules' were formerly known as 'course units' at Royal Holloway.

¹ The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a learner-centred system for credit accumulation and transfer. ECTS credits reflect the total workload required to achieve defined learning outcomes and their associated workload, including teaching hours and guided independent study. 15 UK credits is equivalent to 7.5 ECTS. 30 UK credits is equivalent to 15 ECTS. Further details on ECTS can be found within the [ECTS User Guide 2015](#).

Section 2 – Course details			
Date of specification update	May 2025	Location of study	Egham
Course award and title	MA Creative Writing	Level of study	Postgraduate
Course code	1073	Year of entry	2027/28
Language(s) of Tuition	English		
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department	English and Modern Languages	Other departments involved in teaching the course	N/A
Mode(s) of attendance	Full time and part time	Duration of the course	One year (52 weeks) full-time Two to five years (104 - 260 weeks) part-time
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

Module code	Module title	Credits	FHEQ level	Module status (Mandatory Condonable MC or Mandatory Non-Condonable MNC)
EN5113	Creative Writing Project	60	7	MNC
EN5114	Supplementary Discourses	15	7	MC
EN5116	Reading as a Writer	15	7	MC
EN5117	Extended Essay (Creative Writing)	30	7	MNC

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'.

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.

3.2 Optional modules

In addition to mandatory modules, there may 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.

For the award of an MA students must take two related modules; the choice of the two related modules will dictate what other modules are available to the student.

EN5118 Fiction Workshop (30 credits) *and* EN5906 Fiction Workshop Term 2 (30 credits)
 EN5121 New Prose Narratives (30 credits) *and* EN5907 New Prose Narratives Workshop Term 2 (30 credits)
 EN5901 Poetic Practice (30 credits) *and* EN5908 Poetic Practice Workshop Term 2 (30 credits)
 EN5112 Poetry Workshop (30 credits) *and* EN5909 Poetry Workshop Term 2 (30 credits)

Students who take EN5118 *and* EN5906 or EN5121 *and* EN5907 or EN5901 *and* EN5908 or EN5112 *and* EN5909 will also be required to take EN5114 Supplementary Discourses (15 credits) and EN5116 Reading as a Writer (15 credits).

All students are then able to consider and develop the techniques and skills they have acquired in these courses by incorporating them and extending them significantly into their own personal creative concerns in the following courses, which are taught by individual tutorials in the Summer Term:

EN5113 Creative Writing Project (60 credits) (Mandatory non-condonable, must be passed for the award)
 EN5117 Extended Essay (Creative Writing) (30 credits) Mandatory non-condonable, must be passed for the award)

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 postgraduate taught students are required to take and pass the non-credit bearing Moodle-based Academic Integrity module SS1001 in order to be awarded. The pass mark for the module assessment is stated in the on-line Academic Integrity Moodle module. Students may attempt the assessment as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who otherwise meet the requirements for award as stipulated in the [Academic Taught Regulations](#) but fail to pass the Moodle-based Academic Integrity module will not be awarded.

The programme can be taken part-time over two to five years beginning in September of year one. Students who take courses over more than two years should discuss with the department the order in which to take mandatory and optional courses.

First Year

The two related workshop modules relevant to pathway (60 credits in total)

Second Year

EN5114 Supplementary Discourses (15 credits)
 EN5116 Reading as a Writer (15 credits)
 EN5113 Creative Writing Project (60 credits) (Mandatory non-condonable, must be passed for the award)
 EN5117 Extended Essay (Creative Writing) (30 credits) (Mandatory non-condonable, must be passed for the award)

Section 5 – Educational aims of the course

The aims of this course are to:

- to give a sound basis for the study and practice of literary composition, and the development of creative and artistic sophistication;
- to provide students with knowledge, understanding, intellectual, and discipline-specific skills;
- to provide a flexible and progressive structure in which students are able to practice the art of literary composition, to acquire advanced familiarity and fluency in using literary techniques for the writing of poetry, non-fiction or fiction, and to acquire understanding and appropriate skills relating to distinctive practice-based research and research specialisms;
- to produce graduates with a range of personal and professional skills relevant to the literary world and the world beyond HE, who are able to engage in lifelong learning and to contribute to the literary, artistic and wider community;
- to be suited both to those wishing to complete their university-level studies with a Master's degree and to those for whom a Master's programme is intended to lead to a higher degree.

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 (*)*)

Theme	Course Learning Outcome
K, S, *	1. Acquire an advanced understanding of, and skill in the use of, literary techniques in the development of creative work to a professional level.
K, S, *	2. Learn to analyse and evaluate texts from the perspective of the writer, acquiring a knowledge of common technical and artistic problems and how to resolve them.
K, S, *	3. Develop an individual writing voice, and the ability to recognise and formulate their artistic imperatives. They will learn how to develop their individuality while drawing on and contributing to group discourse. They will learn how to manage uncertainty in taking artistic risks and experimentation.

S, *	4. Learn how to reflect critically on their own work, how to analyse strengths and weaknesses and how to address them.
K, S, *	5. Learn how to approach the work of others as an editor, and how to offer their critique. In doing so, they will refine their skills in analytical thinking and the communication of artistic concepts, technical analyses and sensitive issues with empathy, precision and respect.
S, *	6. Learn how to plan, edit, refine and sustain a project independently and over the long term.
K, S, *	7. Gain insight into the publishing and associated industries and will be equipped to take the next independent steps towards professional publication. They will learn how to present and market their work.
K	8. Demonstrate knowledge of the current literary concerns and discourse, and the broader cultural context in which their work is being made.
K, *	9. Learn new approaches and new ways of responding to challenges, the importance of innovation and the potential to be found in questioning and evolving perspectives and process.
S, *	10. Learn how to motivate, plan, discipline and sustain an independent artistic practice.
S, *	11. Acquire a range of transferrable skills that are more important in the rapidly evolving world of work. These include skills in analytical, creative, technical and conceptual thinking; self-reliance and independence; self-motivation and discipline; an understanding of the values of experiment, innovation and risk; the ability to formulate ideas, arguments and critiques in ways that are clear, sensitive and effective; intellectual, artistic and professional integrity; the ability to communicate in a professional manner; empathy, sensitivity and respect; an ease with group dynamics, diverse experiences and a wide range of perspectives; adaptability and resilience.
S, *	12. Learn how to produce new work through drafting, redrafting and revision, using feedback from peers and tutors, being able to reflect on this in order to utilise what is most useful to their own aims and ambitions.
K, S, *	13. Read and engage with a wide variety of texts, including assigned reading, their own choices of reading, the work of their peers and their own work. They will cultivate an awareness of different traditions and poetics and will be able to identify their own positions and preferences, while being empathetic towards potentially different positions, tastes, ambitions and preferences from peers in a workshop.

Section 7 - Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching is mostly by means of workshops; seminars; seminars and meetings with professional writers, publishers, and agents; one-to-one tutorials; guided independent writing and guided independent study. These help to develop the student as a writer and their knowledge, understanding and to acquire and develop practical and discipline-specific skills. As students progress through the programme, they develop a greater depth of knowledge and understanding of these aspects, through their application and interpretation in particular compositional contexts.

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. Assessments designated as 'summative' will receive a mark 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.

More detailed information on modules, including teaching and learning methods, and methods of assessment, can be found via the online [Royal Holloway Curriculum 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.

Section 8 – Additional costs

There are no single associated costs greater than £50 per item on this 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	7
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
PG Diploma	Passes in at least 120 credits, with fails of between 40% to 49% for up to 40 credits condonable (with the exception of any course specific requirements).	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College
PG Certificate	Passes in at least 60 credits with no condonable fails	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College