

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes **Honours Degree programmes in Comparative Literature and Culture (CLC)**. For Joint and Combined Honours Degree programmes, please also refer to the equivalent document(s) for the other subject(s). This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2013**.

The aims of all Honours Degree programmes in Comparative Literature and Culture are:

- to provide students with a knowledge of the literatures and cultures of various language areas (including, but not limited to, French, German, Italian and Spanish), 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;

Programmes are delivered in three stages, each of which comprises one year of full-time study during which the student must follow courses to the value of four units (one unit is equivalent to 30 national credits). The programmes provide progressive structures in which students are able to gain ever-wider knowledge and understanding, and appropriate skills. The programmes contain a combination of compulsory core courses and optional courses. The core courses introduce students 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 courses, taken from those on offer to other students in the School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures (SMLLC), will complement the core teaching by providing a more detailed knowledge of specific literary and cultural figures, themes and movements. The structure encourages students, in stages two and three, to develop their own interests through informed choice among specialist options on offer in the SMLLC.

CLC can be taken as part of a Joint [and Combined] Honours Degree programme with various subjects; *BA [language and] CLC* programmes are four-year programmes where the third year is normally spent abroad in one of the appropriate language areas, and where exemption from this year abroad is subject to the waiver criteria established by the SMLLC.

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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. The multi-disciplinary nature of the CLC programme encourages the development of a wide range of skills, both discipline-specific and transferable, including:

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

- theoretical knowledge and practical experience of the skills, methodologies and theories of comparative literary and cultural analysis
- a broad knowledge of European 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);
- awareness and understanding of a range of contemporary critical and theoretical approaches to literature and culture;
- 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;
- awareness and understanding of the various relationships and interfaces between literature, culture and other disciplines.

#### *Skills and other attributes*

- critical skills in close reading, the analysis and critical interpretation of written and visual materials, on a number of levels, as appropriate
- command of the techniques of comparative analysis; and appropriate critical and theoretical techniques and terminology;
- sensitivity and responsiveness to a variety of modes of cultural production (particularly literary, theatrical, cinematic, but others too where appropriate) and their generic conventions;
- the ability to conduct research independently using traditional and electronic resources, and develop habits of reflection on study, reading, learning and research;\*
- the ability to work autonomously, manage time effectively and write and think under pressure;\*
- 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;\*
- advanced written and oral communication skills, including the ability to organise and present ideas within the framework of a structured and reasoned argument;\*
- the ability to organise and interpret complex information in a structured and systematic way, and to comprehend and develop sophisticated concepts;\*
- the capacity for independent thought and judgement, along with skills in critical reasoning;\*
- mastery of the key critical discourses associated with the materials and subject-matter\*
- 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;\*
- interpersonal skills, involving recognising and respecting the viewpoints of others;\*
- time management and organisational skills including working to deadlines, prioritising tasks, organising work-time;\*
- the ability to appreciate cultural difference in an increasingly homogenised, globalised world,\*
- in addition, this programme 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.

\* transferable skills

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## Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning is mostly by means of lectures, 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 courses can be obtained from the School's [website](#).

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## Details of the programme structure(s)

Please note that the list of available courses offered is subject to change and not all courses run each year. A full list of courses for the current academic year can be obtained at the School's [website](#).

Courses listed with an **asterisk** are 'compulsory'; that is, they must be passed in order to progress into the subsequent year of study.

The courses in Stage 3 are Core (Pass Required); that is, students who achieve an appropriate mark to receive a degree but who fail to pass these courses in their final year will normally be granted a BA degree in Literary and Cultural Studies.

## Single Honours Degree programme

### **Stage one:**

Students must take:

- ML1101 Reading European Film I (½ unit)
- ML1203 Comparative Textual Analysis (½ unit) \*
- ML1204 A Special Theme in European Culture: The City (½ unit) \*
- ML1205 Introduction to Literary Genre: Tragedy (½ unit)

and courses to the total of **two full units** from a list of Stage One courses offered by the School.

### **Stage two:**

Students must take and pass by the end of their programme:

- ML2206 Histories of Representation (½ unit) \*
- ML2207 Critical and Comparative Approaches (½ unit) \*

Students must also take courses to the value of **one course unit** from a range of Stage Two "ML" comparative courses and courses to the total of **two full units** from a list of Stage Two courses offered by the School.

### **Stage three:**

Students must take one "ML" half-unit comparative course and the corresponding bolt-on dissertation. Students must also take, courses to the total of **three full units** from a list of Stage Three courses offered by the School (which may include one further "ML" half-unit comparative course and the corresponding bolt-on dissertation, or an independent half course dissertation).

## Joint Honours Degree programmes with CLC as an equal component:

Students take the following courses in CLC:

### **Stage one:**

Students must take:

- ML1101 Reading European Film I (½ unit)
- ML1203 Comparative Textual Analysis (½ unit) \*
- ML1204 A Special Theme in European Culture: The City (½ unit) \*
- ML1205 Introduction to Literary Genre: Tragedy (½ unit)

plus specified courses in the other subject.

### **Stage two:**

Students must take and pass by the end of their programme:

- ML2206 Histories of Representation (½ unit) \*
- ML2207 Critical and Comparative Approaches (½ unit) \*

Students must also take courses to the value of **one course unit** from a range of Stage Two modern

languages comparative courses  
plus specified courses in the other subject.

### **Stage three:**

Students must take one "ML" half-unit comparative course and the corresponding bolt-on dissertation

and courses to the total of **one full unit** from a list of Stage Three courses offered by the School (which may include one further "ML" half-unit comparative course and the corresponding bolt-on dissertation, or an independent half course dissertation), plus specified courses in the other subject.

### **Combined Honours Degree programmes with CLC as a major component:**

Students take the following courses in CLC:

#### **Stage one:**

Students must take:

ML1101 Reading European Film I (½ unit)

ML1203 Comparative Textual Analysis (½ unit) \*

ML1204 A Special Theme in European Culture: The City (½ unit) \*

ML1205 Introduction to Literary Genre: Tragedy (½ unit)

and courses to the total of **one full unit** from a list of Stage One courses offered by the School

and specified courses in the other subject. In the case of CLC with International Film students must take ML1101 Reading European Film I(1/2 unit) and ML1102: The Birth of European Film (1/2 unit). In the case of French with Visual Arts students must take ML1301(1/2 unit) Artists and Their Materials and one half unit course from a range of Visual Arts options.

#### **Stage two:**

Students must take and pass by the end of their programme:

ML2206 Histories of Representation (½ unit) \*

ML2207 Critical and Comparative Approaches (½ unit) \*

Students must also take courses to the value of **one course unit** from a range of Stage Two modern languages comparative courses and courses to the total of **one full unit** from a list of Stage Two courses offered by the School

and specified course(s) in the minor subject. In the case of French with International Film students must take ML2101 Reading European Film II (1/2 unit) plus an appropriate ½ unit dealing with a film-related issue from courses on offer (e.g. FR2106, GM2115, SN2013, IT2340). In the case of French with Visual Arts students must take ML2302(1/2 unit) Genres and Movements and one half unit course from a range of Visual Arts options.

#### **Stage three:**

Students must take one "ML" half-unit comparative course and the corresponding bolt-on dissertation

and courses to the total of **two full units** from a list of Stage Three courses offered by the School (which may include one further "ML" half-unit comparative course and the corresponding bolt-on dissertation, or an independent half course dissertation)

and specified course(s) in the minor subject. In the case of French with International Film students must take ML3101 (dissertation). In the case of French with Visual Arts students must take one or two half unit courses from a range of Visual Arts options. They may choose to write a dissertation or long essay as part of their assessment.

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### **Progression and award requirements**

The progression and award requirements are essentially the same across all Honours Degree programmes at Royal Holloway. Students must pass units to the value of at least three units on each stage of the programme. On some programmes there may be a requirement to pass specific courses in order to progress to the next stage, or to qualify for a particular degree title (see **Details of programme structure** above).

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Students are considered for the award and classified on the basis of a weighted average. This is calculated from marks gained in courses taken in stages two and three, and gives twice the weighting to marks gained in stage three. In order to qualify for the award, students must gain a weighted average of at least 35%.

All first year students on single joint or combined honours programmes offered all or in part by departments or schools in the Faculty of Arts & Social Science 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.

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### Student support and guidance

- **Personal Advisors:** Each student is allocated to a particular member of academic teaching staff. Personal Advisors are available to meet their advisees regularly throughout the programme in order to advise on academic, pastoral or welfare issues and to review academic performance. Personal Advisors may also advise students on College and University support services, including the Student Counselling Service, the Health Centre and the Educational Support Office for students with special needs. When a student's usual Personal Advisor has sabbatical leave, the student is re-allocated to another colleague.
- **Office Hours:** All members of staff make themselves available for consultation by students on any academic or pastoral matter at specific hours during each teaching week of the academic year.
- **Academic Co-ordinators:** The Academic Co-ordinator provides a further, back-up source of academic advice. The Academic co-ordinator is also responsible for general oversight of Joint Honours students, liaising as necessary with Personal Advisors and with the other departments on the programme. Matters concerning programme pathways, course options and timetabling are discussed in the first instance with the student's Personal Advisor who may refer these to the Academic Co-ordinator.
- **Language Co-ordinator:** Each language has its own Language Co-ordinator, who may be consulted by students about any matters related to language courses and to the School's audio-visual and CALL resources related to these courses.
- **Period of Residence Abroad (PRA) Co-ordinators:** The PRA Co-ordinators, members of academic staff, run briefing sessions for students in Stage 2 of the programme who are going abroad the following year. The PRA Co-ordinators provide help and advice with applications, forms, accommodation plans, interviews, the British Council, and the Socrates-Erasmus Programme.
- **School Educational Support Office (ESO) Network Member:** The ESO Network Member co-ordinates the provisions made within the School for students with disabilities or special educational needs through liaison with colleagues across the School and elsewhere in College (above all the ESO itself).
- **Student Handbooks:** The *School of Modern Languages Student Handbook* is published online annually and made available to all Modern Languages students via the 'For Students' section of the SMLLC website. It comprises a complete general guide to the School, its various subject areas, and its resources, containing contact details, help available, facilities, advice on study skills, assessment, feedback, plagiarism, Student-Staff Committee, examinations, etc., and information about other sources of support offered by the College. Lists of courses available, with course descriptions, are also available on the SMLLC website.
- **Student-Staff Committee:** All years of the undergraduate programme as well as postgraduate students and teaching staff are represented on this committee, which is chaired by a student. Any student may bring matters of concern before this committee, which, after discussion, will refer them to the appropriate School or College authority for resolution.
- **Careers Advice:** Whilst the principal role is played by the University of London Careers Service, there is also a School Careers Liaison Officer who works with the Careers Service to ensure timely dissemination to students of information concerning careers, employers' forums, or other careers events. A number of these, including sessions designed to raise students' awareness of the marketability of the transferable skills acquired during their university careers, are organized on an annual basis specifically for Modern Languages students.

- **Resources:** The School is situated in the International Building where, along with Royal Holloway International, it offers students access to computer laboratories with dedicated Computer-Assisted Language Learning Software and recording facilities. The School liaises closely with the College libraries to ensure that the needs of students are appropriately met by the College's extensive collections of books, journals and electronic resources. Foreign-language videos and DVDs can be viewed in the library's viewing rooms.

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### **Admission requirements**

The Department's standard conditional offer is available on the [Course Catalogue](#) web page. However, the Department also has considerable flexibility in its admissions and offers policy and strongly encourages applications from non-standard applicants. Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. 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 existing SMLLC degree programmes have successfully progressed into a wide range of professions, including accountancy, banking, environmental, retail and personnel management, market research and advertising, publishing, the tourist industry, teaching, media and central and local government, while some have continued onto Postgraduate studies. In an increasingly globalised and homogenised world, the critical ability to analyse the intersections and convergences of different modes of cultural production from different language areas will offer CLC students a range of career opportunities. For further details 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. In the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise, approximately half of the research produced within the School was rated 'world leading' or 'internationally excellent' in terms of 'originality, significance and rigour'. German in particular was rated among the top 5 departments nationally in terms of proportion of 3\* and 4\* research, while Hispanic Studies achieved the highest score in the country for its 4\* ('world-leading') research publications.

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### **List of programmes**

All the programmes are taught by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and lead to awards of the University of London. Programmes in Comparative Literature and Culture are not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The QAA subject benchmark statement in Comparative Literary Studies describes the general features which one might expect from Honours Degree programmes in the subject, and can therefore be used as a point of reference when reading this document (see [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)). UCAS codes are given in parentheses (see [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)).

### **Single Honours Degree programmes in Comparative Literature and Culture**

BA Comparative Literature and Culture (Q200)

### **Joint Honours Degree programmes with Comparative Literature and Culture as an equal component**

BA Comparative Literature and Culture and French (QR21)  
BA Comparative Literature and Culture and German (QR22)

BA Comparative Literature and Culture and Italian (QR23)  
BA Comparative Literature and Culture and Hispanic Studies (QR24)  
BA Comparative Literature and Culture and English (QQ23)  
BA Comparative Literature and Culture and Philosophy (QV25)  
BA Classical Studies and Comparative Literature and Culture (Q8Q2)

**Combined Honours Degree programmes with Comparative Literature and Culture as a major component**

BA Comparative Literature and Culture with International Film (Q2P3)  
BA Comparative Literature and Culture with Philosophy (Q2V5)  
BA Comparative Literature and Culture with Visual Arts (Q2W6)

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