

# Programme Specification: English Literature: UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER Modern and Contemporary Fictions MA

## Course record information

<b>Name and level of final award</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master of Arts - English Literature: Modern &amp; Contemp Fic</li> </ul> <p>The award is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible</p>
<b>Name and level of intermediate awards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma (Pg Dip) - English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fictions</li> <li>• Postgraduate Certificate (Pg Cert) - English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fictions MA</li> </ul>
<b>Awarding body/institution</b>	University of Westminster
<b>Teaching institution</b>	University of Westminster
<b>Status of awarding body/institution</b>	Recognised Body
<b>Location of delivery</b>	Primary: Central London
<b>Language of delivery and assessment</b>	English
<b>QAA subject benchmarking group(s)</b>	N/A
<b>Professional statutory or regulatory body</b>	N/A
<b>Westminster course title, mode of attendance and standard length</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MA English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fiction FT, Full-time, September or January start - 1 year standard length</li> <li>• MA English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fiction PT, Part-time day, September or January start - 2 years standard length</li> </ul>
<b>Valid for cohorts</b>	From 2023/4

## Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all postgraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information. For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements. More information can be found here: <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply>.

## Aims of the programme

The MA English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fictions is part of a suite of Masters programmes in cultural, critical and literary studies. This suite also includes the MAs in Critical and Cultural Studies, in Art and Visual Culture, and in Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture. The MA English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fictions provides a course that is wide-ranging in terms of historical period, but also has specific focus on particular topics. Options are offered across the four MAs, enabling you to construct a programme of study in which you can follow particular themes in the areas that most interest you.

Specifically the MA English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fictions aims to:

- provide an advanced, wide-ranging study of English Literature
- examine recent critical developments in literary studies
- set literary studies within an interdisciplinary contextual framework
- conduct specific examination of particular periods, movements and locations
- foster an ability to apply theoretical perspectives to texts
- develop advanced skills in argument, synthesis and critical expression
- enhance advanced skills of research and presentation specific to English
- provide a route to further research.

Supporting the University of Westminster's Black Lives Matter Commitment Plan as well as the wider Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity agenda, the MA English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fictions has been developed using an inclusive approach that ensures you will have a learning experience that respects diversity, encourages active participation, considers students' varying needs, encourages and enables you to tailor your learning according to your career and individual aspirations, and equips you with the skills to work in a changing and diverse world.

The course team is fully committed to equality, diversity and inclusivity in the curriculum, in teaching, learning and assessment practices, and in our learning spaces. We aim to eliminate all arbitrary barriers to your learning and to work with you to achieve that aim. Our aims are underpinned by three principles:

- provision of an inclusive learning environment, both physical and digital;
- diversification and inclusivity of the curriculum;
- provision of diverse and inclusive co- and extra-curricular activities.

Practically, you will see our commitment working in the following ways:

**Inclusive learning environment:** accessible materials are provided across all modules and as far as possible, a choice of readings or types of preparation for individual class sessions are offered (eg reading; listening to a podcast produced by experts; watching documentaries). A range of assessment modes is employed which takes into account different learning styles and individual strengths. In a number of these assessments, you are able to choose your own topic focus, texts, or approach, and thus have opportunities to explore what is most important to you within the realm of the module content. Your final dissertation is on a topic of your choice, with opportunities to create your own reading lists, determine your primary source base, and to approach a topic with a suitable methodological framework.

**Diversification of the curriculum and approaches:** core and option modules take in a wide range of topics, themes, and critical philosophies. Although the course concentrates on texts written in, or in some cases translated into, English you will be encouraged at all times to think what that 'Englishness' consists of in the language and contexts of the texts, the critical perspectives that have been brought to bear on the texts and on the range of voices that have both produced and commented upon English Literature, past and present.

**Diverse and inclusive co- and extra-curricular activities:** the choice of visiting speakers will prioritise issues of diversity and inclusion across the range of professions and industries relevant to the course; fieldwork and study visit locations will be selected in consultation with students and with the intention of exploring sites and events which speak to a range of approaches to learning and developing understanding.

## Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements, which will inform the service delivered to students.

The MA English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fictions aims to develop graduates who have the knowledge, skills, motivation, networks and connections to work across a wide variety of professions. The course provides you with sophisticated critical and practical skills and a widely applicable knowledge base. This enables further study at MPhil or PhD levels, but is also particularly relevant to professions in a wide range of creative, cultural, and communication industries. As well as the more obvious careers, such as teaching, journalism, editing, publishing, copywriting, students are encouraged to explore the wide applicability of their skills in other fields, such as science or art communication, policy writing, reviewing, digital content creation, subtitling, script editing, PR and story-telling for business.

## What will you be expected to achieve?

### Course learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning.

These are threshold statements of achievement the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

The overall knowledge and understanding you will gain from your course (KU)

Graduate attributes are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course (GA)

Professional and personal practice learning outcomes are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (PPP)

Key transferable skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course. (KTS)

**Level 7 course learning outcomes:** upon completion of Level 7 you will be able to:

- 001 Have examined a range of literary texts and other forms of cultural production. ( KU )
- 002 Be able to demonstrate a thorough knowledge of some recent critical developments. ( KU )
- 003 Be familiar with the interdisciplinary connections of literary studies. ( KU )
- 004 Have a sophisticated knowledge of particular periods and movements. ( KU )
- 005 Understand and use the critical ideas of re-reading and interpretation. ( KU )
- 006 Have a sophisticated knowledge of current critical positions and debates. ( KU )
- 007 Be able to deploy advanced theoretical approaches in relation to a variety of texts. ( KU )
- 008 Have developed advanced skills of argument, synthesis and critical expression. ( KU )
- 009 Have enhanced skills of research and presentation. ( KU )
- 010 Critical skills in the close reading and analysis of texts. ( SS )
- 011 Critical skills in the reading and assessment of a range of critical works. ( SS )
- 012 Advanced use of an appropriate critical terminology. ( SS )
- 013 Sophisticated awareness of generic conventions and of the shaping effects upon communication of context, authorship, textual production, and intended audience. ( SS )

- 014 The ability to place critical arguments and debates within the discipline as an historical and conceptual discourse. ( SS )
- 015 An ability to articulate how different formal, linguistic and cultural contexts effect the nature of language and meaning. ( SS )
- 016 A sophisticated response to the central role of language in the creation of literary meaning. ( SS )
- 017 Advanced skills in effective communication and argument, oral and written. ( SS )
- 018 The scholarly skills appropriate to the discipline, including accurate citation of sources and use of bibliographical conventions. ( SS )
- 019 The ability to present sustained and persuasive written and oral arguments, advanced literacy and communication skills, and the ability to cogently and clearly apply these in appropriate contexts. ( KTS )
- 020 The capacity to critically examine any form of discourse using close reading and analysis of texts. ( KTS )
- 021 The ability to acquire quickly substantial quantities of complex information of diverse kinds in a structured way, involving the use of sophisticated interpretive skills. ( KTS )
- 022 Competence in planning and execution of essays and other kinds of work. ( KTS )
- 023 Capacity for independent thought and judgement. ( KTS )
- 024 Advanced skills in critical reasoning. ( KTS )
- 025 The ability to comprehend and develop intricate concepts in an open-ended way which involves an understanding of purpose and consequences. ( KTS )
- 026 The ability to work with, and in relation to, others through the presentation of ideas and information. ( KTS )
- 027 The ability to understand, interrogate and apply a range of theoretical positions, as well as the importance of alternative perspectives. ( KTS )
- 028 The ability to handle information and argument in a critical and self reflective manner. ( KTS )
- 029 Sophisticated research skills, including scholarly information retrieval. ( KTS )
- 030 Information-technology skills such as word processing and electronic data access information. ( KTS )
- 031 Interpersonal and team skills, relating to the ability to work flexibly and creatively with other people and engage in rational debate. ( KTS )
- 032 Time-management and organisational skills, as shown by the ability to plan and present findings effectively. ( KTS )
- 033 Confidence in expression and the articulation of complex ideas. ( KTS )

## How will you learn?

### Learning methods

Learning methods are aimed at facilitating a student's active and critical learning by the acquisition, understanding and application of knowledge, skills and professionalism. The learning methods employed on the course vary depending on the type and content of a module and its intended learning outcomes, but all are based on a principle of blended work in which students take responsibility for engagement with materials and links provided on Blackboard before class sessions and follow up in consolidation afterwards. Consequently, a wide range of learning methods are used across the courses' modules, for example, the use of:

- class-based learning (seminars, workshops, tutorials), usually augmented by Learner engagement with weekly pre-class content provided online (recordings, readings, prep tasks, etc.);
- team/group work inside and outside of the classroom to enable you to further develop your teamwork skills to work effectively in a professional environment;
- learner engagement with weekly post-class consolidation and/or practical tasks feeding into the next session
- feedback from tutors and peers, both formally on assessed work and informally in class discussion and tutorials
- independent study including reading, seminar preparation, and assessment drafting and preparation.
- engagement with library and online sources to develop your research and analysis skills
- study visits accompanied by tutors or unaccompanied

You are supported throughout your studies by Blackboard, the University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), webbased teaching materials, and the Library and IT services. Blackboard functions as an interactive and dynamic digital learning platform and provides access to sites that give important information related to the course, individual modules, and general university information. The Blackboard module sites are used for online collaborative learning activities and provide ready access to online module readings, seminar plans and assessment schedules, pre-recorded lectures and a wealth of other learning materials.

### Teaching methods

Our teaching methods are aimed at enabling your active participation in your learning through knowledge and skills acquisition by means of critical discussion, engagement, self-study and practical experience. The main teaching mode is the seminar which focuses on student-centred learning with use of non-assessed presentations and in-class projects to encourage your participation. The teaching strategy is wide-ranging and varies across the modules that make up the programme of study. Those selected for an individual module depend on what is most appropriate for the module's topic, learning outcomes and assessment strategy, and involve seminars, workshops, tutorials, and, for the final Project or Dissertation, individual supervision sessions. All modules combine critical and theoretical debate with practice-focused discussion and activities. This approach encourages you to actively participate in the development of a solution by allowing you to express your thoughts and to get immediate individual feedback from peers and/or the instructor. Seminars are used to provide a firm grounding in the theory, methods and techniques relevant to the module's topic. Seminars are made up of varying combinations of short, lecture style presentations from seminar leaders, student presentations and peer-to-peer feedback, plenary discussion and work in small groups. Practical workshop-type activity is also offered, during which you will sometimes work alone, sometimes in groups, on practical problem-solving and activities around subject engagement. Tutorials are one-to-one or small group sessions that provide focused developmental work on group or individual tasks. You can meet with lecturers informally, but where tutorials are scheduled, they are part of the curriculum, for example a small group tutorial to agree a task topic. Individual Supervision is provided to you when working on your final Dissertation. The final Project or Dissertation module is a key part of the course and is designed to unify and integrate skills and knowledge gained on the individual taught modules. It provides the opportunity to put into practice and extend what has been learned and to focus on the subject that is most relevant to you and to your ambitions.

## Assessment methods

Assessments and feedback are an integral part of the learning process and enable you to gauge your progress in relation to learning outcomes and to reflect on what you have learned. Assessment helps you to identify areas in which you are strong and areas in which you may need to improve your learning, and to make informed decisions on the pace and focus of your own independent learning. On the MA English Literature, all assessments and feedback mechanisms are designed to form part of the learning experience and will take a variety of forms. For example, assessments may involve practical exercises ranging from small tasks that might be completed during a seminar to more complex tasks, such as the design and creation of an artefact, or the investigation of a critical or theoretical question. Assessments may be written, such as an essay or review, or oral, such as a presentation. In some modules you are able to select the format of the assessment response, for example, being able to choose to submit a video essay rather than a written one. Some of the assessments are designed to be completed individually, whereas other assessments may require students to work as part of a team, emulating as closely as possible the environment you may experience in a professional setting.

Assessments can be:

- formative - these are not given a mark but help establish where you are in your learning journey, preparing for and sometimes directly feeding into the final assessment
- summative - these are marked and will measure how much you have learned.

The type and nature of the assessment method employed varies depends on the module and its associated learning outcomes, but all are designed on the principles of purpose, personalisation and progression, meaning that you should be able to make the assessment your own by choosing the topic (and in some modules, the format) and that the assessment should enable you to move forward in your learning.

Assessed work is marked using clearly stated assessment criteria. Timely and forward-looking feedback is given for all assessments, with guidance on how you can improve your work in future. Forms of feedback will vary - you will get written (or voice-recorded) commentary on all summative assessments, while formative feedback may come in class, from peers or informally during tutorials.

## Course Structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year. Additional free text information on the choices may also be included, for example where students must choose one of two modules.. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

## Modules

### Level 7

Part-time students will normally complete 180 credits in two academic years.

The MA consists of three core modules (of which the dissertation is one) and four option modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7HUMS001W	MA Dissertation	Core	60	30
7ELIT007W	Themes and Problems in Modern and Contemporary Literature	Core	20	10
7ELIT012W	Writing the Self	Core	20	10
7ELIT013W	Literatures of London	Option	20	10
7ELIT011W	Queer Now	Option	20	10
7ELIT014W	Reading the Nation	Option	20	10
7CLST015W	Urban Cultures	Option	20	10
7ELIT008W	Victorian Explorations	Option	20	10
7CLST018W	Work Placement in Cultural Institutions	Option	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot register for your first choice of option modules.

## Professional body accreditation or other external references

N/A

## Course management

The Course is directly managed by a Course Leader and each module on the course also has a designated Module Leader responsible for the administration and monitoring of its design and delivery. Key members of the course team meet regularly each year to identify and address ways of improving the design and delivery of the course.

The Head of School has overall responsibility for this course and all those hosted in the School.

## Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations).

Course specific regulations apply to some courses.

## Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Campus Registry. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students. Further information on Blackboard can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/your-student-journey/when-you-arrive/blackboard>

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development).

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught in their College. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

## Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/student-advice>.

The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/students-union>

## How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel. University Panels normally include internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university, a representative from industry and a Student Advisor.

The course is also monitored each year by the College to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the evidence of student surveys, student progression and achievement and reports from external examiners, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course and make changes where necessary.

A Course revalidation takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with revalidation panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

## **How do we act on student feedback?**

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through student engagement activities at Course/Module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Course representatives are elected to expressly represent the views of their peers. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the course representatives.
- There are also School Representatives appointed jointly by the University and the Students' Union who meet with senior School staff to discuss wider issues affecting student experience across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key College and University committees.;
- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.
- Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.

This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate, if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification is supplemented by the Course Handbook, Module proforma and Module Handbooks provided to students. Copyright in this document belongs to the University of Westminster. All rights are reserved. This document is for personal use only and may not be reproduced or used for any other purpose, either in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the University of Westminster. All copies of this document must incorporate this Copyright Notice – 2022©

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