UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER
LEADING THE WAY

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	**MA Creative Writing: Writing the City**
	The MA Creative Writing: Writing the City is a masters degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma Creative Writing: Writing the City
	Postgraduate Certificate Creative Writing: Writing the City
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	University of Westminster, Regent Street
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month:	Full time or Part time
QAA subject benchmarking group(s):	Not applicable
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	Not applicable
Date of course validation/review:	2010 / 2014
Date of programme specification approval:	2014
Course Leader:	Dr Monica Germanà
Course URL:	westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate
Westminster Course Code:	PMENG01F (Full-time) PMENG01P (Part-time)
JACS code:	W800
UKPASS code:	P044321

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

There are standard minimum [entry requirements](#) for all undergraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information.

[westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply](#)

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: [westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply](#)

AIMS OF THE COURSE

The MA Writing the City is one of three Creative Writing Masters programmes (Writing the City, English Language and Creative Writing, and TESOL and Creative Writing) and part of a suite of Masters programmes under the title of Cultural, Critical and Literary Studies that is based within the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities. This suite also includes the MAs in Critical and Cultural Studies, in Visual Culture, and in Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture. Like other postgraduate creative writing courses, this MA is aimed at students who already have some writing experience and a facility with language, but who are willing to develop their creative writing to a more advanced and professional level. The MA Writing the City provides a course that is wide-ranging in terms of genre, but also has a distinctive focus on a specific subject matter: the city of London. Students on the course are encouraged to respond to the urban environment through their writing. All the MA modules will invite students to discover their own way to map the city, both in their creative writing as well as in their research projects. Options are offered across the programmes, enabling students to construct a programme of study in which they can follow particular themes in the areas that most interest them, such as fiction writing, playwriting, and digital writing.

Specifically the MA Writing the City aims to:

- develop and scrutinise the ideas of reading and writing the city
- enable students to write in a variety of genres of their choice and to aim for a professional standard in their writing
- foster the use of focussed research as the basis for imaginative and original creative work
- enhance advanced skills of presentation specific to creative writing
- employ knowledge of urban writing, assimilated from a variety of existing
- texts, of various literary forms and strategies, in developing new creative work
- experiment within and beyond the conventions of established literary
- genres
- explore writing opportunities offered by a variety of media
- relate their own creativity to a relevant tradition of urban writing
- create a substantial and innovative body of work relating to and growing beyond that tradition
- allow students to develop advanced skills in argument, synthesis and critical expression

- provide a route to a professional writing career
- encourage students to document their own creative processes with a degree of sophistication appropriate to MA level work;
- to work as writers with other writers in an atmosphere of commitment and artistic ambition.

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 that will inform the service delivered to students.

The MA Writing the City is intended to provide students with sophisticated writing skills and a widely applicable skill base. Throughout the programme, students will be encouraged to reflect on their professional development and take proactive steps in networking with other writers and identify useful opportunities for their career development. A wide range of extra-curricular activities – including writers' events and talks, contribution to *The London Postcard* student blog and the student magazine *The Wells Street Journal* – will support this process throughout the academic year. Depending on the student's inclinations, this degree will enable students to embrace a range of careers in the writing, creative and cultural industries. In particular, the critical and practical skills the graduates will have acquired by the end of their degrees, will make students desirable candidates in the following career areas: freelance writing, journalism, theatre and performance-based writing, media, education, arts management, copy-editing, publishing, research and academia. Additionally, the degree offers transferable skills, which will enable students pursuing careers outside the writing business to enhance their professional development through the application of creative thinking and writing in areas as diverse as business, marketing and human resources.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. They are threshold statements of achievement and are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course.

Knowledge and Understanding
Graduates of the MA will:

- be able to identify the key elements of urban writing
- be familiar with the interdisciplinary connections of writing the city
- develop a sophisticated knowledge of particular periods and movements in the representation of the city
- have a sophisticated knowledge of current writing on London in comparison to other urban traditions
- be able to deploy advanced reading approaches in relation to a variety of texts
- have developed advanced skills of argument, synthesis and critical expression
- have enhanced skills of research and presentation.
- be able to apply creative thinking to a variety of contexts.

Specific Skills
Graduates of the MA will acquire a range of advanced scholarly and writing skills such as:

- imaginative ways to use language creatively in relation to city writing
- critical skills in the close reading and analysis of texts
- advanced writing skills in a variety of genres
- sophisticated use of the key elements of writing (voice, plot, character)
- developed awareness of a range of generic conventions in relation to the urban environment and of the shaping effects upon communication of context, textual production, and intended audience
- advanced skills in effective communication and argument, oral and written
- rigorous self-discipline (including time-management, motivation and emotional balance)
- professional redrafting, editing and proof-reading skills
- the scholarly skills appropriate to the discipline, including accurate citation of sources and use of bibliographical conventions
- negotiating opportunities and networking within a competitive and challenging writing market.

Key Transferable skills

- Professional editing and redrafting of own and other people's works
- advanced script development
- professional workshop delivery
- advanced presentation of creative and critical work
- a sophisticated sense of audience and the appropriate methods to reach diverse groups of readers, spectators and listeners
- effective communication with a range of audiences
- self-motivation to produce a significant piece of writing
- realistic devising and planning of projects within specified time and/or budgetary constraints
- mature ability to give and receive constructive criticism of their own and others' work
- proficiency in group dynamics, feedback and workshop methods
- confidence in approach to own career development
- capacity for independent thought and aesthetic judgement
- knowledge of relevant technology to textual and performance production
- creative thinking in diverse intellectual situations.

LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

Learning
The workshop-based structure of the programme will allow students to learn through interactive practice. Further to this each student will be assigned an academic tutor from among the academic staff with whom they will have at least one timetabled session in the first semester.

Teaching
Modules are taught by one two-hour or three-hour seminar and workshops per week, depending on the subject. Sessions are focussed on student-centred learning, with use of non-assessed writing exercises and in-class projects to encourage student participation. Teaching will also involve the use of London institutions as a resource, including the directed use of various archives, theatres and galleries.

Assessment
Assessment methods deployed on the course include coursework in the form of portfolios allowing students to experiment in a variety of genres, reflective logs, workshop leadership, as well as the final 10,000-12,000 word writing project. There are no formal examinations.

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 or 7 modules per year, following the diagram below:

Credit Level 7				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
7CREW006W	Tales of the City	Core (for September starters)	20	10
7CREW001W	Conflict and the City	Core (for September starters)	20	10
7CREW002W	Creative Practice	Core	20	10
7CREW007W	The Writing Business	Core	20	10
7CREW005W	Portfolio: How to Write Creatively	Core (for January starters)	40	20
7CREW009W	The Writing Project	Core	60	30
7CREW004W	Language and The Imagination	Option	20	10
7CREW003W	Digital London	Option	20	10
7ELIT005W	Reading the Nation: Discourse, Representation and Text	Option	20	10
7ELIT004W	Reading Contemporary Culture: Politics and Prizes	Option	20	10
7ELIT003W	London and Modernism: Manifesto, Literature, Painting, Film	Option	20	10
7CLST015W	Urban Cultures	Option	20	10
7ENGL001W	Analysing Spoken and Written Discourse	Option	20	10
7ENGL005W	Sociolinguistics	Option	20	10
7CLST018W	Work Placement in Cultural Institutions	Option	20	10

NB: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year.

Academic regulations
The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations

HOW WILL YOU BE SUPPORTED IN YOUR STUDIES?

Course Management
The Course is hosted in the Department of English, Linguistics and Cultural Studies, one of the departments within the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities. The Course is directly managed by a Course Leader within the Department of English, Linguistics and Cultural Studies. Each module on the course also has a designated Module Leader responsible for the administration and monitoring of its design and delivery.

The course teaching team consists of staff from Creative Writing team in the Department of English, Linguistics and Cultural studies. Key members of the course team meet regularly each year to identify and address ways of improving the design and delivery of the course. Staff undergo annual appraisal and observation of their teaching by colleagues leading to staff development through course attendance and/or research and scholarly activity. Staff teaching on the course also attend events organised by the Faculty Academic Standards and the Faculty Teaching and Learning Groups around current teaching, learning and assessment issues. The programme also recruits professional writers to facilitate specific parts of the course.

The MA course intersects with, and draws upon, the institutional resources provided by the wider set of events and cultural initiatives co-ordinated by staff within the Faculty as well as both the writers' events series hosted by the Department of English, Linguistics and Cultural Studies, by the IMCC, and by the various events and collaborative ventures organised under the umbrella of the Westminster-Smithsonian Colloquium.

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 Faculty Registry Office. 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

Learning Support
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.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students[1] can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed

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[1] Students enrolled at Collaborative partners may have differing access due to licence agreements.

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 at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services
The University of Westminster Student Affairs 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. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University.

How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?
The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2010. The panel included internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers.

The course is also monitored each year by the Faculty 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 outcomes from Course Committees, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. Each Faculty puts in to place an action plan. This may for example include making changes on the way the module is taught, assessed or even how the course is structured in order to improve the course, in such cases an approval process is in place.

A Course review 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 review panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years e.g. from Course Committees 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 Course Committees students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to Committee to expressly represent the views of their peer. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.

- Each Faculty also has its own Faculty Student Forum with student representatives; this enables wider discussions across the Faculty. Student representatives are also represented on key Faculty 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.

- The University also has an annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey or PTES which helps us compare how we are doing with other institutions, to make changes that will improve what we do in future and to keep doing the things that you value.

For more information about this course:

Please contact Dr Monica Germanà, Course Leader,
m.germana@westminster.ac.uk