

## Programme Specification: Post Graduate Taught

### For students starting in Academic Year 2023/24

#### 1. Course Summary

<b>Names of programme and award title(s)</b>	MA Creative Writing
<b>Award type</b>	Taught Masters
<b>Mode of study</b>	Full-time Part-time
<b>Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award</b>	Level 7
<b>Normal length of the programme</b>	1 year full-time or 2 years part-time
<b>Maximum period of registration</b>	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
<b>Location of study</b>	Keele Campus
<b>Accreditation (if applicable)</b>	n/a
<b>Regulator</b>	Office for Students (OfS)
<b>Tuition Fees</b>	<p><b>UK students:</b></p> <p>Full-time fee for 2023/24 is £8,900</p> <p>Part-time fee for 2023/24 is £4,900*</p> <p><b>International students:</b></p> <p>Fee for 2023/24 is £17,700*</p>

**How this information might change:** Please read the important information at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>. This explains how and why we may need to make changes to the information provided in this document and to help you understand how we will communicate with you if this happens.

\*We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study by an inflationary amount. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions for full details. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

#### 2. Overview of the Programme

Course start dates: September OR January (for MA or Diploma) September (for Certificate)

Creative Writing is a relatively new discipline in British universities, despite several long established programmes. It has long had a role in education in North America. At MA level at Keele, we aim to guide and advise talented students towards imaginative writing of an advanced, publishable standard, where publishable does not mean that every student will get published, but that their work is of a standard to be published if market conditions are favourable. The Keele MA is aimed at students who are already writers with a body of work, who wish to improve and develop their writing to the point where they have a manuscript that could potentially be offered to a publisher. It offers such students an opportunity to develop and improve their writing by working with published authors and other students in a workshop situation. Of equal importance is the opportunity it offers for writers to understand their work in a critical context and in relation to contemporary writing and culture. The Keele MA exposes writers to the kinds of discussion and critical interaction that will enable them to see their writing not just as self-expression, but as part of an

evolving literary tradition. Students will benefit by gaining knowledge and understanding of the following:

- critical self-awareness about the writing process and the literary work;
- a thorough understanding of the history and development of at least one specified literary genre;
- writing a specified literary genre to a publishable standard.

### **3. Aims of the programme**

Keele University offers modules in creative writing as part of the English Principal Programme at undergraduate level. The MA builds on the growing writing culture in the institution, which extends to readings, publications, workshops, and writers' groups.

The broad aims of the programme are to:

- provide opportunities for the practice and study of creative writing at an advanced, publishable level;
- provide a supportive and constructively critical environment in which students can work with published writers and their peers to improve their writing;
- provide students with the necessary skills to write at an advanced, publishable level.

### **4. What you will learn**

The intended learning outcomes of the programme (what students should know, understand and be able to do at the end of the programme), can be described under the following headings:

- Subject knowledge and understanding
- Subject specific skills
- Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

#### **Subject knowledge and understanding**

Successful students will gain:

- Critical self-awareness in relation to the writing process.
- Critical awareness about the literary work
- A critical understanding of a specified literary genre.

#### **Subject specific skills**

Successful students will gain:

- Writing skills to an advanced, publishable level
- An advanced level of critical skills

#### **Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)**

Successful students will gain:

- Advanced communication skills
- Time management and planning
- The ability to present complex, critical ideas effectively
- The ability to give and accept constructive criticism

#### **Keele Graduate attributes**

Keele University is committed to developing graduates who demonstrate the ten Keele Graduate Attributes (<http://www.keele.ac.uk/distinctive/keelesgraduateattributes/>). Through studying the MA in Creative Writing you will have the opportunity to develop your existing skills, knowledge and aptitudes in the following ways:

1. An open and questioning approach, demonstrating qualities such as independence of thought. Through critical evaluation of your own written work and that of your fellow students, you will develop your ability to give and take constructive criticism. This will be reflected in the development of your writing.
2. An appreciation of the development and value of creative work and an awareness of the dynamic and provisional nature of the creative process. Taught modules address the critical contexts for creative work. These will include reference to the links between literary and cultural criticism and the creative process.

3. The ability to handle different genres and forms. The ability to handle short and long writing assignments. The ability to deploy appropriate research skills. You will have some writing experience before you start the programme, but the MA in Creative Writing gives you the opportunity to practise your skills in a structured and critical environment. The *Writer as Critic, The Critic as Writer* module will give you the opportunity to relate your work to contemporary cultural and critical contexts. In addition, there are opportunities to practise your information-handling techniques and abilities as you undergo the taught and assessed elements of this programme. Students can obtain further, tailored guidance through out the programme from the course team, the Keele liaison librarian for Humanities and Social Sciences, or from Student Services.
4. Solve problems creatively, determining the techniques appropriate to the task from the range offered by the MA in Creative Writing. Problem-solving and the application of appropriate theories and techniques are inherent to all taught modules, where the ability to identify issues in a piece of writing and give constructive feedback is central to both seminar and workshop situations. Your MA Portfolio will consolidate these skills by allowing you to complete a sustained piece of writing in your chosen genre.
5. An appreciation of the social, ethical, environmental and global implications of your studies. *The Writer as Critic, Critic as Writer* module is specifically concerned with writers' relationship to social, political and ethical concerns. The reflective commentaries on submitted work also address these areas.
6. Effective written and oral communication skills. Clear and effective written and verbal communication are central to the programme. The taught modules encourage thorough and critical student engagement in seminar and workshop discussion. Expertise in writing is central to the Programme. All modules of the programme include written assessments, so there are repeated opportunities to hone your style, structure and fluency in a variety of written formats, including poetry, the short story, the novel, and life writing. In tackling the final Portfolio you will be supported in drafting, writing and submitting a substantial piece of work that will require sustained demonstration of good or excellent writing in your chosen genre.
7. The attributes necessary to pursue your future goals. The MA in Creative Writing strives to provide you with the knowledge, skills and confidence to assess, attempt and achieve your career or academic goals. At the start of the course you may not have clear ambitions for your career trajectory; the duration of your studies offers you the chance to talk to tutors, and the Keele Careers and Employability service, to explore the available options and position yourself to take full advantage of them. You can also consider pursuing a practice-based PhD in Creative Writing at the conclusion of your Masters programme.
8. The ability and motivation to participate as an active citizen or community member. Humanities programmes inherently encourage an appreciation of the needs and perspectives of others and so inculcate a spirit of tolerance and participation. Creative Writing requires that you consider a wide variety of differing viewpoints and cultural situations. Furthermore, we foster community spirit in our taught modules via positive contacts staff-to-student and student-to-student. This creates a supportive context of collaboration and networking for the benefit of both students and staff.
9. A professional and reflective approach encompassing aspects of leadership, personal integrity, empathy and accountability. The importance of personal responsibility, self-regulation and disciplinary ethics are integral to the creative writing workshop. Reflection on and the application of personal and disciplinary principles is a component of the methodological discussion required in the dissertation.
10. The ability to adapt to changing circumstances. Students usually embark on their MA programme with some idea about the scope and content of their Portfolio, but the practicalities of research and the nature of available source materials frequently demand adaptation or recasting of their plans. Your writing will develop throughout the programme and you should be prepared to allow for substantial changes in your approach and method.

## 5. How is the programme taught?

'The Writer as Critic, The Critic as Writer' is taught as a two-hour seminar. It is taught with support from colleagues in the School of Humanities. It explores the relationship between writing and contemporary cultural criticism. The tutors and students present on critical questions in their own research and/or writing and on key areas of debate in contemporary culture.

The optional MA Creative Writing modules ('Writing Fiction', 'Writing Poetry', 'Life Writing') are taught through weekly two-hour workshops. Students are introduced to a selection of indicative examples of the relevant literary genre. Students are set writing-specific tasks. They present their own work to the group with a verbal commentary and receive critical feedback from tutors and fellow students. Although these are Options, students are expected to complete the module which corresponds to their eventual portfolio medium (i.e. Fiction, Poetry or Life Writing.).

'The Writer in the Community' module - also optional - aims to equip the student with skills and experience in the design and delivery of services commonly undertaken by writers in the community and cultural landscape in which they work. It gives students a chance to create and deliver a professional project. Typical 12-week projects include:

- designing and delivering creative writing workshops

- mentoring less experienced writers
- steering a literary editing project
- setting up and putting on a literary event
- creating a web-based literary resource

The 'Portfolio' (Dissertation) module is taught through individual supervision. This includes regular individual and/or small group supervision meetings providing students with opportunities to

- Discuss their writing plans and structure
- Get advice on reading, research and writing
- Review their progress

These supervision meetings offer an important opportunity for students to discuss their ideas with the tutor.

Teaching on the modules is supplemented by a visiting speaker programme that includes creative writers and which may include other professionals in the literary arts.

## 6. Teaching Staff

Two core writers are responsible for the creative components of the course:

James Sheard, Senior Lecturer and author of *Scattering Eva* (Jonathan Cape, 2005), *Dammtor* (Jonathan Cape, 2010) and *The Abandoned Settlements* (Jonathan Cape, 2017), which was shortlisted for the T.S. Eliot Prize.

Emma Henderson, Lecturer and author of *Grace Williams Says It Loud* (Sceptre, 2011), which was shortlisted for the Orange Prize for Fiction and *The Valentine House* (Sceptre, 2017), which was shortlisted for the Historical Writers Association Gold Crown Award.

From 2023/24, it is anticipated that two further appointments of writers will provide additional depth in the teaching of fiction, and a new strand of script writing and/or a broader expertise in digital forms of creative practice. A further appointment in 2024/25 is planned, to provide breadth in genre writing.

We also draw on the critical expertise of colleagues in English Literature, including:

Dr Ceri Morgan, Senior Lecturer in English, with an interest in participatory projects and geopoetics (walking and creative practice).

Professor Tim Lustig, literary scholar in Henry James, novelist with interests in forms of Life Writing.

Dr. Emma Parker, a literary scholar with interests in creative writing and theories of Life Writing.

The University will attempt to minimise changes to our core teaching teams, however, delivery of the programme depends on having a sufficient number of staff with the relevant expertise to ensure that the programme is taught to the appropriate academic standard.

Staff turnover, for example where key members of staff leave, fall ill or go on research leave, may result in changes to the programme's content. The University will endeavour to ensure that any impact on students is limited if such changes occur.

## 7. What is the structure of the programme?

Please note that the optional modules will vary from year to year.

**MA**

<b>Compulsory modules</b>	<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Period</b>
The Writer as Critic, The Critic as Writer	ENG-40018	30	Semester 1
Portfolio	ENG-40023	90	Semester 1-2
<b>Optional modules</b>			
Writing Fiction	ENG-40019	30	Semester 1
Writing Poetry	ENG-40020	30	Semester 1
The Writer in the Community	ENG-40041	30	Semester 2
Life Writing	ENG-40031	30	Semester 2

*NB:* students should take the optional module corresponding to their eventual Dissertation speciality (e.g. Writing Poetry for a student intending to submit a final Dissertation in Poetry).

### **Postgraduate Diploma**

After 120 credits students will have gained a thorough knowledge of the relationship between writing and contemporary criticism and a firm grounding in the skills required to write in two literary genres.

<b>Module</b>	<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Period</b>
The Writer as Critic, The Critic as Writer	ENG-40018	30	Semester 1
Portfolio (Diploma)	ENG-40048	30	Semester 1-2
<b>and two of the following options:</b>			
Writing Fiction	ENG-40019	30	Semester 1
Writing Poetry	ENG-40020	30	Semester 1
Life Writing	ENG-40031	30	Semester 2
<b>TOTAL CREDITS: 120</b>			

### **Postgraduate Certificate**

After 60 credits students will have gained a thorough knowledge of the relationship between writing and contemporary criticism and a firm grounding in the skills required to write in one literary genre.

<b>Module</b>	<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Period</b>
The Writer as Critic, The Critic as Writer	ENG-40018	30	Semester 1
<b>and one of the following options:</b>			
Writing Fiction	ENG-40019	30	Semester 1
Writing Poetry	ENG-40020	30	Semester 1
Life Writing	ENG-40031	30	Semester 2
<b>TOTAL CREDITS: 60</b>			

### **Programme Outcomes and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies**

The tables below outline the possible routes (part-time or full-time) for the three different exit awards (MA, PGDip, and PGCert).

#### **MA Part-time (September Start)**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	The Writer as Critic	Option
<b>Year 2</b>	Option	Portfolio

### **MA Part-time (January Start)**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	Option	Writer as Critic
<b>Year 2</b>	Option	Portfolio

### **MA Full-time (September Start)**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	The Writer as Critic	Option
	Option	Portfolio

### **MA Full-time (January Start)**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	Option	Writer As Critic
	Option	Portfolio

Students taking the MA will be allowed 10 months continuation status for an additional fee in the case that they are required to submit the dissertation.

### **Diploma Part-time (September Start)**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	The Writer as Critic	Option
<b>Year 2</b>	Option	Portfolio (Diploma)

### **Diploma Part-time (January Start)**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	Option	Writer as Critic
<b>Year 2</b>	Option	Portfolio (Diploma)

### **Diploma Full-time (September Start)**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	The Writer as Critic	Option
	Option	Portfolio (Diploma)

### **Diploma Full-time (January Start)**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	Option	Writer As Critic
	Option	Portfolio (Diploma)

### **Certificate Part-time (September Start Only)**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	The Writer as Critic	Option 1

### **Certificate Full-time (September Start Only)**

	<b>Autumn</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	The Writer as Critic
	Option

All modules may be taken as CPD short courses and the credits may later be included under the University's Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy towards an MA. Further details relating to the University's policy regarding RPL can be found via <https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmesandmodules/recognitionofpriorlearning/>

## **Learning Outcomes**

The table below sets out what students learn in the programme and the modules in which that learning takes place. Details of how learning outcomes are assessed through these modules can be found in module specifications.

### **Level 7**

<b>Subject Knowledge and Understanding</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Module in which this is delivered</b>
Critical self-awareness in relation to the writing process.	All modules
Critical awareness about the literary work	All modules
A critical understanding of a specified literary genre.	Writing Fiction Writing Poetry Portfolio Life Writing Portfolio (Diploma)

<b>Subject Specific Skills</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Module in which this is delivered</b>
Writing skills to an advanced, publishable level	Writing Fiction Writing Poetry Portfolio Life Writing Portfolio (Diploma)
An advanced level of critical skills	All modules

<b>Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Module in which this is delivered</b>
Advanced communication skills	The Writer as Critic Writing Fiction Writing Poetry The Writer in the Community
Time management and planning	The Writer as Critic Writing Fiction Writing Poetry The Writer in the Community Life Writing
The ability to present complex, critical ideas effectively	The Writer as Critic Writing Fiction Writing Poetry The Writer in the Community Life Writing
The ability to give and accept constructive criticism	The Writer as Critic Writing Fiction Writing Poetry The Writer in the Community

## 8. Final and intermediate awards

<b>Master's Degree</b>	180 credits	You will require at least 150 credits at Level 7
<b>Postgraduate Diploma</b>	120 credits	You will require at least 90 credits at Level 7
<b>Postgraduate Certificate</b>	60 credits	You will require at least 40 credits at Level 7

## 9. How is the Programme Assessed?

The wide variety of assessment methods used on this programme at Keele reflects the broad range of knowledge and skills that are developed as you progress through the degree programme. Teaching staff pay particular attention to specifying clear assessment criteria and providing timely, regular and constructive feedback that helps to clarify things you did not understand and helps you to improve your performance. The following list is representative of the variety of assessment methods used on your programme:



- written assignments in a specified literary genre;
- verbal presentations;
- written assignments in the form of a critical essay;
- a portfolio of writing in a specified literary genre. The Portfolio consists of a substantial writing portfolio in one genre equivalent to a short collection of poetry or short stories, a novella or part of novel. The Portfolio is taught initially through individual supervision and exchanges of ideas and drafts via email.

The marking of assignments is subject to clear, discipline-specific criteria appropriate to FHEQ level 7. Creative writing assignments are judged according to the following criteria:

- use of correct English (apart from the very occasional slip) in grammar, sentence-structure, punctuation and control of appropriate literary forms (stanzas, metre, paragraphs, dialogue etc.);
- evidence of technical control, control of literary form and control of voice, style, idiom and register;
- elements of originality in a conventional framework skilfully constructed (may be strikingly original but not well-organised; or it maybe extremely skilful in its use of convention but show little originality);
- showing the potential to be eloquent and memorable;
- the subject-matter of the work will have been explored with some insight and breadth of viewpoint.
- knowledge and understanding of form and subject-matter will be evident.

As one would expect in a creative writing programme, the assessment of writing assignments lies at the core of the programme. For more detail on the form and length of assessments please see the module outlines.

Students present work in progress in the creative writing workshops and receive feedback from fellow students and the workshop tutor. They present work in progress to their supervisor for the Portfolio (Dissertation) module and receive feedback and suggestions for revision.

Marks are awarded for summative assessments designed to assess your achievement of learning outcomes. You will also be assessed formatively to enable you to monitor your own progress and to assist staff in identifying and addressing any specific learning needs. Feedback, including guidance on how you can improve the quality of your work, is also provided on all summative assessments within three working weeks of submission, unless there are compelling circumstances that make this impossible, and more informally in the course of tutorial and seminar discussions.

## **10. Accreditation**

This programme does not have accreditation from an external body.

## **11. University Regulations**

The University Regulations form the framework for learning, teaching and assessment and other aspects of the student experience. Further information about the University Regulations can be found at: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>

If this programme has any exemptions, variations or additions to the University Regulations these will be detailed in an Annex at the end of this document titled 'Programme-specific regulations'.

## **12. What are the typical admission requirements for the Programme?**

See the relevant course page on the website for the admission requirements relevant to this programme: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/>

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is considered on a case-by-case basis and those interested should contact the Programme Director. The University's guidelines on this can be found here: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/accreditationofpriorlearning/>

## **13. How are students supported on the programme?**

Where possible, students are allocated their supervisor for the Portfolio module (Dissertation module) at the beginning of the programme and work with that supervisor on their chosen genre (Poetry, Fiction, or Life Writing) throughout. Students are allocated Academic Mentors for welfare and study-related issues. In addition, the Programme Director is available for consultation on module choices and to offer supplementary welfare guidance. Module tutors give feedback on assessments.

## **14. Learning Resources**

The Keele Writing Room (currently CBB1.056) is normally the main teaching room, but outside teaching hours, it is available to students as a place to work and exchange views with other students. MS Teams supplements the KLE for teaching and document storage, and also gives information about events as well as providing a forum for students. The Library has a range of publications and online resources relevant to the

programme.

## 15. Other Learning Opportunities

Students are encouraged to engage with community organisations and to arrange writing events through the 'Writer in the Community' module. Students have worked with local libraries, museums, and health groups on this module. Details of projects can be obtained from the Programme Director.

## 16. Additional Costs

As to be expected there will be additional costs for inter-library loans and potential overdue library fines, print and graduation. We do not anticipate any further costs for this programme.

## 17. Quality management and enhancement

The quality and standards of learning in this programme are subject to a continuous process of monitoring, review and enhancement.

- The School Education Committee is responsible for reviewing and monitoring quality management and enhancement procedures and activities across the School.
- Individual modules and the programme as a whole are reviewed and enhanced every year in the annual programme review which takes place at the end of the academic year.
- The programmes are run in accordance with the University's Quality Assurance procedures and are subject to periodic reviews under the Revalidation process.

Student evaluation of, and feedback on, the quality of learning on every module takes place every year using a variety of different methods:

- The results of student evaluations of all modules are reported to module leaders and reviewed by the Programme Committee as part of annual programme review.
- Findings related to the programme from the annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), and from regular surveys of the student experience conducted by the University, are subjected to careful analysis and a planned response at programme and School level.
- Feedback received from representatives of students on the programme is considered and acted on at regular meetings of the Student Staff Voice Committee.

The University appoints senior members of academic staff from other universities to act as external examiners on all programmes. They are responsible for:

- Approving examination questions
- Confirming all marks which contribute to a student's degree
- Reviewing and giving advice on the structure and content of the programme and assessment procedures

Information about current external examiner(s) can be found here:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/externalexaminers/currentexternalexaminers/>

## 18. The principles of programme design

The programme described in this document has been drawn up with reference to, and in accordance with the guidance set out in, the following documents:

**a.** UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

**b.** Keele University Regulations and Guidance for Students and Staff: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations>

The programme relates to the guidelines for teaching Creative Writing published by the National Association of Writers in Education (NAWE), which has been referenced as standard by the English Subject Centre. See the NAWE website: <http://www.nawe.co.uk/writing-in-education/writing-at-university/research.html>

## Version History

### This document

**Date Approved:** 17 April 2023

### Previous documents

<b>Version No</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Summary of and rationale for changes</b>
1	2022/23	JAMES SHEARD	29 April 2022	
1	2021/22	JAMES SHEARD	28 April 2022	
1	2020/21	JAMES SHEARD	28 April 2022	