

**Welcome Pack**

**BA (HONS) ENGLISH**

**BA (HONS) CREATIVE WRITING**

**SINGLE AND JOINT HONOURS**

**2017–2018**



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**Welcome to English and Creative Writing at the University of Northampton.**

You’re joining a Department with a high research rating and a reputation for looking after and getting the best out of its students. You’re also embarking on the exploration of a wonderful range of literature that we hope will become a lifetime’s study. You will learn through a range of experiences at university, including interactive lectures, seminar discussions, workshops and online learning activities.

At level four (year one) you will take six modules. This pack is designed to help you to get to know the modules you will be studying with us and to offer some guidance as to the preparation you can be undertaking over the summer. It includes a welcome from each of the teams (Creative Writing and English); a brief description of your modules; and some suggested reading and activities which will help you prepare for university.

We look forward to meeting you and wish you every success in your studies at the University of Northampton.

**The English and Creative Writing Team**

**Welcome to English at the University of Northampton**

We are delighted that you have applied to study English at the University of Northampton. We hope you will have a rewarding and enjoyable course of study with us. The English degree at Northampton is diverse and academically rigorous; it will provide you with a thorough knowledge of English Literature from Early English to the present day whilst allowing you plenty of opportunity to pursue your own particular areas of interest. At the University of Northampton students are encouraged to read and enjoy a wide range of literature, and to articulate their responses to it. We start from the premise that there can be no fixed and irrefutable interpretations of literature, but there can be assessments and opinions which are widely acceptable because they are based upon extensive and detailed reading and are supported by intelligent and perceptive argument.

All the English tutors at Northampton are researching and publishing in their specialist fields, which means that all our modules are taught by tutors who are experts in that particular subject, whether that is Shakespeare, Victorian literature or contemporary writing. You will be taught by tutors who are passionate and enthusiastic about their subject and who work hard to ensure their students get the very best out of their degree course.

We are sure you will find our English course inspiring and rewarding and we look forward to meeting you in September.

**Dr Jon Mackley**

**Programme Leader for English**

**Email: Jon.Mackley@northampton.ac.uk**

**Welcome to Creative Writing at the University of Northampton**

Writing expressively and effectively is a truly satisfying experience which allows you to explore a series of vital connections between experience and language. It will deepen your appreciation of the literature you read during your degree, and it will enhance your ability to work with words in imaginative and reasoned ways.

Your degree in Creative Writing will explore some of the fundamental aspects of writing through allowing you to practice a variety of genre including prose fiction, prose non-fiction, and poetry. There will also be an opportunity to develop your own interests outside of Creative Writing as well as to specialise in the final portfolio – a writing project which you can approach in your own style.

The study of writing is also the study of reading, and during your degree we will ask you to read a series of texts which will form the basis of your own explorations. Seminar discussions, in which you will be expected to contribute your own responses and insights, are balanced by workshops, where your work will be developed through suggestions from tutors as well as other student writers.

A committed team of writers will work with you and help to develop your own distinctive style through a series of rigorous exercises. We aim to make your work more controlled and distinctive through the twin disciplines of teaching seminars and reflective workshops.

A degree in Creative Writing is just the beginning of a deeply rewarding artistic commitment, and we all hope you find your time with us enriching and fulfilling.

**Dr Charles Bennett**

**Programme Leader for Creative Writing**

**Your Degree Modules at a Glance**

LIT1001: Reading Literary Genres

LIT1021: Creative Reading and Writing 1: Explorations

LIT1024: Fiction 1: Here and Now

LIT1025: Poetry 1: Sound and Shape

LIT1028: Writing the Present: Post-War and Contemporary British Literature

LIT1029: Nineteenth Century Literature

LIT1033: Life, Liberty and Happiness: Introduction to American Literature

LIT1035: Language and Creativity

**Your Degree Modules**

**Single Honours English**

LIT1001; LIT1021; LIT1028; LIT1029; LIT1033; LIT1035

**Single Honours Creative Writing**

LIT1001; LIT1021; LIT1024; LIT1025; LIT1028; LIT1035

**Joint Honours English and Creative Writing**

LIT1001; LIT1024; LIT1025; LIT1028; LIT1029; LIT1035

**Joint Honours English (with any other subject)**

LIT1028; LIT1029; LIT1035 (and three modules from your other subject)

**Joint Honours Creative Writing (with any other subject)**

LIT1024; LIT1025; LIT1035 (and three modules from your other subject)

**LIT1001 Reading Literary Genres Jon Mackley**

**Compulsory for Single Honours English Students**

**Compulsory for Single Honours Creative Writing Students**

**Compulsory for Joint Honours English Students also studying Joint Honours Creative Writing**

**(This module is NOT taken by Joint Honours English Students when studying ANY OTHER SUBJECT)**

**Course Content**

This is an introduction to degree-level literary study which is structured around the study of key genres, both popular and literary. The aim of the module is to introduce you to the different strategies for the reading and interpretation of texts, and for the organisation of texts into categories (genres). We will study key genres from literary forms, with particular attention to Horror, Science Fiction, Fantasy, the Detective story: the lyric poem, comedy and tragedy. We will consider the importance of the concept of genre itself, as well as the conventions and principles of the examples under consideration. Concepts and issues covered in seminars include narrative analysis, the nature of poetic language and form, and the relationship between the satirist and society. You will read a number of examples of each genre, though the focus will be on forms and conventions rather than on individual authors. The module will provide you with a solid grounding in literary studies, and give you a chance to put into practice recent developments in criticism. You will read texts (including ‘reading’ film) from different literary-historical periods and analyse them in seminars, group presentations and in written coursework.

**Reading List**

‘The Lottery’ – Shirley Jackson

‘The Fall of the House of Usher’ – Edgar Allan Poe

‘The Tell-Tale Heart’ – Edgar Allan Poe

‘The Rats in the Walls’ – H.P. Lovecraft

‘The Call of Cthulhu’ – H.P. Lovecraft

‘A Sound of Thunder’ – Ray Bradbury

‘Flowers for Algernon’ (Short story) – Daniel Keys

‘Bloodchild’ – Octavia Butler

‘The Adventure of the Speckled Band’ – Arthur Conan Doyle

*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* – C.S. Lewis

*Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* – J.K. Rowling

*Silent Spring* – Rachel Carson

*Into the Wild* – Jon Krakauer

‘A Modest Proposal’ – Jonathan Swift

*Being There* – Jerzy Kosinski

*Macbeth* – William Shakespeare

Poetry Provided (Sonnets, Elegy and Pastoral)

**Summer Activity**

The reading list is in order of the seminar schedule so it would be beneficial to begin the reading promptly; for the seminar in Week 1 all students need to print and read ‘The Lottery’ by Shirley Jackson which can be found at : <http://sites.middlebury.edu/individualandthesociety/files/2010/09/jackson_lottery.pdf>

**LIT1021 Creative Reading and Writing 1: Explorations Rod Rosenquist**

**Compulsory Single Honours English and Single Honours Creative Writing**

This module will explore some of the fundamental aspects of writing through allowing you to practice the distinctive modes of genre writing in fiction, non-fiction, poetry and radio drama.

**Term 1**

**Sir Arthur Conan-Doyle    *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (any edition)**

**Kathleen Jamie                *Findings*: London, Sort-of Books, 200**5

**Term 2**

**Poetry              *The Rattle Bag,*Faber and Faber, 2005**

**Radio Drama**

**Secondary Reading**

(You do not have to buy these books, but you may find it helpful to have read some of them in advance of the module).

Paul Mills, *The Routledge Creative Writing Coursebook*, Routledge, 2005

Peter Sansom, *Writing Poetry,* Bloodaxe Poetry Books, 1993

Shaun MacLoughlin, *Writing for Radio* (2nd Ed). How to Books, 2001.

**Summer Activities**

***The Hound of the Baskervilles*:**Look particularly at the sense of PLACE, for example, the descriptions of London, Watson's first descriptions of Dartmoor, and the difference between CIVILISED and UNCIVILISED.

***Findings*:** Look at "Darkness and Light", "Skylines", "Crex-crex", "The Surgeon's Hall", "Findings" and "Markings"

***The Rattle Bag:*** Read widely in poems from different eras and from different authors. See which poems stand out for you (for good or bad reasons). Make notes about which poems do you particularly identify with and why?

**Radio Drama**

Listen to a variety of audio plays, particularly **Dylan Thomas, *Under Milk Wood***(performed by Richard Burton), and Douglas Adams's ***The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*** and ***The War of the Worlds*** (Orson Welles version). See what you can find on Radio 4 (*The Archers,* for example). Make a note of what techniques are used so that you can \*SEE\* what is only conveyed through an audible medium.

**LIT1024 Fiction 1: Here and Now Richard T. Kelly**

**Compulsory for Single and Joint Honours Creative Writing Students**

The Fiction 1 module alternates weekly between seminars on specific topics, and writing workshops. In seminars you will develop your analytical skills by shared reading and discussion of works by some of the best writers of short fiction past and present. We focus on certain ‘core strengths’ a writer must make use of: e.g. characterisation, dialogue, drama, description, point of view, empathy. Seminars then provide the impetus for the following week’s writing workshop exercise: you will appreciate how things can be done, improving your self-expression but also trying out techniques you may not have considered before. By the end of the module you will have written and polished two portfolios of your own compositions.

The texts below are essential reading for this module, in the editions here recommended. Seminars are arranged by themes rather than authors, and a proportion of reading will be supplied to you electronically; but Cheever, Joyce, Hall and Lasdun are masterly writers whom we will look at more than once over the year. Saro-Wiwa’s short novel *Sozaboy* will be studied in the second term. John Mullan’s book is a work of literary appreciation outlining various techniques in fiction writing, to which you will be referred throughout the module.

**Reading List**

*The Collected Stories of John Cheever* (Vintage, 1990) ISBN: 978-0099748304

*Dubliners* by James Joyce (Penguin Classics, 2000) ISBN: 978-0141182452

*The Beautiful Indifference* by Sarah Hall (Faber, 2012) ISBN: 978-0571230181

*It’s Beginning to Hurt* by James Lasdun (Vintage, 2010) ISBN: 978-0099512325

*How Novels Work* by John Mullan (OUP, 2008) ISBN: 978-0199281787

*Sozaboy: A Novel in Rotten English* by Ken Saro-Wiwa (Longman, 1994) ISBN: 978-0582236998

**Summer Activities**

* Try to get in the habit of always carrying a notebook and pen with you, and writing down your daily thoughts, observations and ideas. (*‘If the ideas come,*’ said the great French poet-artist Jean Cocteau, *‘one must hurry to set them down out of fear of forgetting them. They come once; once only!’*)
* Online you will find two contrasting essays by writers on the art of writing, which we will look at in seminars. If possible try to read them in advance:

‘The Nature and Aim of Fiction’ by Flannery O’Connor:

<http://w3.salemstate.edu/~pglasser/the-nature-and-aim-of-fiction.pdf>

‘Anarchy and the Imagination’ by Hanif Kureishi (reproduced here in a newspaper as ‘What they don’t teach you at creative writing school’)

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/10594606/Hanif-Kureishi-What-they-dont-teach-you-at-creative-writing-school.html>

* From *The Collected Stories of John Cheever* please read his story ‘The Swimmer’; we will discuss it in the first session of the module.

**LIT1025 Poetry 1 Charles Bennett**

**Compulsory for Single and Joint Honours Creative Writing Students**

**Things to help you be ready for when we start in September**

Poetry is the highest expression which writing can achieve. It is language approaching the condition of music whilst simultaneously providing a rich source of available meaning. It is also the form of writing which most students (and most writers) tend to find intimidating, baffling and occasionally incomprehensible. This module will attempt to unravel the mysteries and alleviate the fears which surround poetry, and show you how to develop your own instinctual and individual approach to formal patterns and sound-structures. Through exposing you to innovative examples from the rich heritage of writing in English, and through a series of carefully planned and consistently rigorous formal exercises, this module will provide you with a sound knowledge of the fundamental aspects of formal (and informal) poetic composition.

We will study a variety of poems from a range of periods and genres in order to appreciate the flexibility and inventiveness of poetry, and will examine the tactile nature of vowels and consonants, as well as the deliberate song of English and the delicate interplay of the rhythmic line with the grammatical sentence. By the end of the module, you will have become familiar with some major poetic forms (the sonnet, the villanelle) and you will have explored a series of invaluable poetic devices (such as dramatic monologues, similes and metaphors) which will allow you to adopt a more controlled and distinctive approach to your own work.

**Required Reading**

Edna Longley, editor. *The Bloodaxe Book of Twentieth-Century Poetry*. ISBN 978-1852245146

**During the summer, in the Longley anthology, it would really help if you could please read the selections from the following poets:**

HARDY YEATS EDWARD THOMAS LAWRENCE

SASSOON MUIR ELIOT GURNEY

ROSENBERG OWEN GRAVES BUNTING

**Selected Secondary Reading**

**Poetry Anthologies – there are lots of these: try this one to begin with in addition to Longley**

Neil Astley. *Staying Alive*. ISBN 978-1852245887

**Books that help you to write and understand poetry - try one of these two**

Poetry Centre. *Poetry for Dummies.* ISBN 978-0764552724

Matthew Sweeney & John Hartley Williams.  *Teach Yourself Books: Writing Poetry*. ISBN 978-0340663776

**LIT1028 Writing the Present Claire Allen**

**Compulsory for Single Honours English Students**

**Compulsory for Single Honours Creative Writing Students**

**Compulsory for Joint Honours Students studying English AND Creative Writing**

Welcome to Writing the Present. During this module you will be studying a range of exciting and thought-provoking texts from the post-war and contemporary period including novels, plays and poetry. The module considers key developments in poetry, drama and the novel in the context of both literary movements and social change. It examines a range of writers portraying the mainstream and margins of British culture. It is designed to develop your skills in reading a variety of contemporary texts, introduce theoretical approaches, and devlope key study skills. The module is delivered through a series of interactive lectures, seminars, workshops and directed online research exercises.

The reading list below will provide the main focus of our discussion in seminars and workshops during the module. It is essential that you read these in advance and bring copies along with you. The texts are listed in the order in which we will study them. You may use any edition.

**Reading List**

**Autumn Term**

George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty Four

Alan Moore and David Lloyd, *V for Vendetta* (this is a graphic novel)

Samuel Beckett, Endgame

Sarah Kane, *Blasted*

**Spring Term**

Martin Amis, Money

Jeanette Winterson, Sexing the Cherry

Andrea Levy, Small Island

John Cooper-Clarke, *Ten Years in an Open Necked Shirt*

**Secondary Reading**

John Brannigan. Orwell to the Present: 1945-2000

Peter Barry. *Beginning Theory*

Malcolm Bradbury*. The Modern British Novel 1878-2001.* (Revised Edition, 2001).

James F. English. *A Concise Companion to Contemporary British fiction*

**Summer Activities**

Over the summer try to read as many of the primary texts as you can and take some notes about your thoughts and responses. You might also like to read the introduction to John Brannigan’s Orwell to the Present: 1945-2000. Research and explore what you think some of the key themes and topics might be that we need to think about in relation to studying contemporary British literature.

**LIT1029 19th Century Literature Phillippa Bennett**

**Compulsory for Single and Joint Honours English Students**

Welcome to the Nineteenth-Century Literature module (LIT1029). The nineteenth century is a fascinating and influential period in literary history and you will probably recognize some of the writers and books below. The texts listed here are essential reading for the module so you will need to bring copies of these to the relevant seminars. The specified editions are the ones we recommend as they are accurate, have good notes and include introductory essays and, in the Norton editions, additional critical and contextual material. These are the editions that will be referred to in class when we undertake close reading and you are strongly advised to use these editions. The texts are listed in the order of study for the module which will help you with your preparation over the Summer.

**Reading List**

*The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Volume E – The Victorian Era (Norton, 2012). This will be a core text for the module comprising the poetry and drama we will be studying throughout the year in addition to contextual material.

Emily Brontë. *Wuthering Heights*. Norton Critical Edition, 2002.

Elizabeth Gaskell. *Mary Barton.* Norton Critical Edition, 2008.

Charles Dickens. *Hard Times.* Norton Critical Edition, 2000 or 2016.

Wilkie Collins. *The Woman in White.* Oxford: OUP, 2008.

Thomas Hardy. *Tess of the D’Urbervilles.* Oxford: OUP, 2008.

George Bernard Shaw. *Mrs Warren’s Profession.* This is included in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* Volume E.

Oscar Wilde. *The Importance of Being Earnest.* This is included in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* Volume E.

William Morris. *News from Nowhere.* Oxford: OUP, 2009.

H.G. Wells. *The Time Machine.* London: Penguin Classics, 2005.

**Summer Activities**

Undertake some research on the nineteenth century and what it was like to live and work in the Victorian era, and do some background reading on the literature of the period. Two very good (and short!) books on the period include *Key Concepts in Victorian Literature* by Sean Purchase (Palgrave 2006), and *Nineteenth-Century Britain: A Very Short Introduction* by Christopher Harvie and Colin Matthew (OUP 2000). You could also visit The Victorian Web: [www.victorianweb.org](http://www.victorianweb.org) and the BBC history website: [www.bbc.co.uk/history](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history).

**LIT1033 Introduction to American Literature Laurence Marriott**

**Compulsory for Single Honours English Students**

Welcome to the introductory American literature module on the English programme.

This module will introduce you to a range of texts that illustrate the development of a national literature and culture in the US from the Colonial period up to the present day. Through the study of novels, poems and non-fiction forms, seminars will analyse how American writing has developed alongside the emerging republic and how it has responded to key social and historical developments.

The texts are arranged chronologically but will be grouped around the themes of race, gender, region, the West, class, war, counter-culture and the contemporary. The notion of founding a nation on the philosophical concepts contained in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution will frame the question ‘What is an American?’ throughout the module, as will the ways in which critical perspectives can illuminate our readings of American texts.

**Summer Activities**

In preparation for this module please read the American Declaration of Independence’ available at <http://www.ushistory.org/DECLARATION/document/>. Please also read as many of the texts from the primary reading list above as you can (the texts are listed in the order in which we will study them), and take some notes about your initial thoughts and responses. You should also conduct some secondary reading from the resources listed above. Think about trying to gain a sense of an overview of key American social and cultural developments.

**Reading List**

**Books**

Nathaniel Hawthorne *The Scarlet Letter* (any print edition)

Frederick Douglass *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (London: Dover, 1995)

Kate Chopin *The Awakening* (London: Dover, 1994)

Stephen Crane *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (London: Wordsworth, 1995)

**Spring term:**

John Steinbeck *The Grapes of Wrath* (London: Penguin, 2001) Tim O’Brien *The Things They Carried* (London: Flamingo, 1990)

If you cannot find the specific editions, don’t worry.  Just get whatever print edition is available.

**Filmography**

The Grapes of Wrath (20th Century Fox 1940) Dir. John Ford

**Secondary Reading**

The following texts provide a valuable overview of American social and cultural developments:

Hugh Brogan. *The Pelican History of the United States of America*

William H. Chafe. *The Unfinished Journey: America since World War II*. (3rd edition.)

George Tindall & David E. Shi. *America: A Narrative History* (available online)

Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury. *From Puritanism to Postmodernism: a History of American Literature*

**LIT1035 Language and Creativity Sam Reese**

**Compulsory for Single Honours and Joint Honours English Students**

**Compulsory for Single Honours and Joint Honours Creative Writing Students**

##### Welcome to LIT1035 Language and Creativity. This module will give you an understanding of the relationship between English language and its various everyday creative functions. It will help you to explore a variety of language uses, and will encourage you to reflect on your own uses of language(s). It supports other Level 4 modules in English & Creative Writing.

This module will examine both variety and variation in language uses; to identify both how and why we each adapt our language uses according to many factors: to signal things about ourselves; to have different effects on people; to perform social actions; to accomplish political and ideological goals. Creative use of language arises from an awareness of such linguistic variety, particularly if your own control of variety and variation is both skilful and strategic. The rational of the module is to make you aware of (and to encourage you to develop further) your own command of linguistic resources.

**Set Text: The Book You Must Buy**

Sara Thorne. *Mastering Advanced English Language.* 2nd Edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008.

**Summer Activity**

Look at the British Library site about Accents and Dialects and just explore!

[http://sounds.bl.uk/Accents-and-dialects](https://webmail.northampton.ac.uk/owa/redir.aspx?C=eWM1PZh9mXDwuFV7R254-i5AQ7lqw0B1iFXZcKAHzVUyjlqOpYjUCA..&URL=http%3a%2f%2fsounds.bl.uk%2fAccents-and-dialects)