

## Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

### Basic Course Information

1.	Awarding Institution:	Nottingham Trent University
2.	School/Campus:	School of Arts and Humanities, Clifton campus
3.	Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study:	BA (Hons) Creative Writing Full time / Part time
4.	Normal Duration:	3 years FT; 4-7 years PT.
5.	UCAS Code:	W800

### 6. Overview and general educational aims of the course

This course aims to allow for you to practice and study the art of creative writing in a supportive and constructive environment and in an instructive manner. The Creative Writing teaching team, all published writers themselves, are able to offer a wide range of creative writing disciplines, such as poetry, fiction, writing for children and young adults, writing for stage and screen, and travel writing. The team is committed to high quality teaching and research and draws on their research and publication strengths, when delivering modules. At the heart of the degree in level 4, is the core module, 'Becoming a Writer', which encompasses the genres of creative writing in which you can develop and specialise at levels 5 and 6. Running alongside this requirement, are current English modules, 'Arguing about English' and 'The Book Group and Curating Nottingham', which allow for the enhancement of your critical awareness, close reading abilities and employability knowledge. Both of these modules include elements of creative writing.

You will be taught via a series of lectures and workshops, where the onus is on engagement, participation and peer appraisal. Visiting experts from the publishing industry and local freelance authors will be invited to speak to student cohorts about their experiences in the industry. You will emerge from the course with the skills and experience, gained through the curriculum and your writing, to be the confident, articulate and enabled graduate that is needed in today's creative industry sector.

In summary the course aims to:

- Attract motivated writers irrespective of background, age, race, gender or disability.
- Provide you with a learning environment that motivates and consolidates your writing interests from foundational study of key genres and editing skills through to the creative writing dissertation and/or the creative industries project.
- Provide you with knowledge and skills that are recognised as key to the study of creative writing at undergraduate degree level.
- Offer you the opportunity to study abroad in the second year of your study.
- Offer opportunities to engage with outside practitioners and agencies such as Bromley House Library, Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham Writers' Studio and Confetti. There are a broad range of

employability opportunities interwoven throughout the degree, which will allow you to further enhance your engagement in a professional context and, alongside collaboration with other NTU students, to study writing for film and TV.

- Provide you with the skills required to embark on a possible career as a freelance writer.
- Teach the art of critically reading as a writer.

**7. Course outcomes**

Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.

**Knowledge and understanding**

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- Creatively evaluate a variety of genres through an ability to write in them. (B)
- Provide a confident analysis of the professional world of writing and editing.
- Evaluate the processes of submitting work to magazines and other professional bodies, such as publishers.
- Critically evaluate the function of the imagination in producing creative work.
- Evaluate creative and critical thinking in a wide range of texts.
- Be critically alert to literary heritage and associated cultural readings.
- Critically evaluate how culture, language, technology and economics affect how, where and by whom texts are produced and received.
- Examine how reflective practitioner work in professional roles enhances graduate employability.
- Conduct independent research through self-formulated questions and tasks and organise relevant material to produce a substantial creative output and achieve professional standards of presentation. (B)

(B) = Maps on to QAA English Benchmark Statement 2015

**Skills, qualities and attributes**

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- Explore, define and analyse the role of collaboration in producing writing that is both engaging and professional.
- Devise and manage deadlines, both individually and collaboratively. (B)

- Write clearly, accurately and effectively. (B)
- Respond professionally to giving and receiving feedback. (B)

(B) = Maps on to QAA English Benchmark Statement 2015

## 8. Learning and teaching methods

You will be taught primarily by lectures, followed by smaller workshop groups. These groups will provide a supportive environment in which to show your work (which will usually be written before the weekly workshops) and receive and give verbal feedback on the work that is presented. Individual contact time, in the form of tutorials (office hours) with tutors will be made available during individual modules. You will also be required to submit, as part of every portfolio, a critical commentary contextualising the creative work that you have produced.

You will achieve key transferable skills that will be assessed by the written work that you produce, by the giving of presentations, and by the giving and receiving of feedback. Your critical and analytical skills will be further enhanced by studying two English modules at level 4. At levels 5 and 6, there will be a range of optional English modules that you might choose in order to enable you to develop your writerly passions and interests.

At levels 5 and 6 the emphasis falls more toward collaboration and interactivity. You will be required to undertake team-based projects, for example, and you will further develop the editing skills taught at level 4. These will help you to develop the skills that are crucial for Creative Writing graduates at the same time as you explore the issues central to the studying of the discipline.

At level 6 you will have the opportunity to initiate, plan and complete your own creative project through the 40-credit Creative Writing dissertation

This experience will allow you to hone your writing and your research skills in a supportive workshop environment, via weekly group meetings. This will be supplemented by individual supervisory sessions, with a nominated dissertation supervisor. This supervisor will also visit the group, which will normally be small in number, for workshops several times throughout the academic year.

You will have, at level 6, the opportunity to concentrate solely on your writing by studying Creative Writing modules or to extend your studies more widely, by choosing from a range of modules based on the Creative Writing and English team's research, which will extend your subject knowledge and allow you to participate in debates at the cutting edge of the discipline. You will also have the opportunity to work on the Writing and Creative Industries project, to further enhance your understanding of industry practice, digital presentation and working to an employer-set brief, in order to prepare for graduate employment.

Learning and teaching support is comprehensive. All modules are supported by module documentation (online via the NOW Virtual Learning Environment) and staff members are available via an 'office hours' system for individual tutorials. Students and staff communicate freely via email and

this is encouraged as an effective means of answering queries (though students are encouraged to make use of tutors' office hours for consultation when this is more appropriate). Your feedback is actively sought (at module and course level) and your comments inform development of modules and modes of delivery.

## 9. **Assessment methods**

The assessment methods for the degree will primarily be summative, with formative assessments taking place throughout the module, in the form of workshop feedback, one-to-one tutorials, and group feedback. The summative tasks normally fall towards the end of the module, with the formative assessments designed to build your creative skills and prepare you for the summative assessments.

The main types of summative assessment are:

- Writing portfolios (consisting of creative work and evidence of the drafting process)  
Supplementary critical commentaries (which will be a part of the portfolio)
- Presentations
- Reports
- Essays

These assessment types are introduced at level 4 and become progressively more challenging at levels 5 and 6.

The final-year Dissertation is the most demanding form of assessment, and this is supported, in part, by the level 5 core module, Publishing: Concept to Dissemination, alongside modules such as Writing and Editing at level 4.

The skills that students develop (see subject learning outcomes, sections 6 and 7 above) are examined by the summative assessments, and are developed, tested and reviewed through formative assessments, and for which you receive feedback on your progress. Through the development of your skills in formative tasks (which might include writing exercises and prompts, written and oral feedback in workshops, critical commentary preparation, and presentations) you will be ready to approach the summative tasks / portfolios with confidence.

Assessment criteria are published via GBA matrices on feedback forms, which are annotated by staff and returned with comments to students. The matrices are made available to you well in advance of assessment deadlines. The criteria are guided by University statements on achievement levels, but are defined for each assessment in relation to module learning outcomes which, in turn, feed into Subject and Course learning outcomes. Module teams annually review assessment policy. All assessments are internally moderated to ensure fairness across module teams, and dissertations are marked independently by two separate examiners. Modules taken at levels 5 and 6 are further moderated by Subject and Course External Examiners who report back to the team and the University on standards and quality. Their comments feed into Subject and Course development strategies.

**10. Course structure and curriculum**

The course is studied over three years full-time or between four and seven years part-time. Part-time students will have the same module choices and restrictions as full-time students. The first year is broadly foundational, with students studying the three core elements of creative writing. The core modules structure the course and are weighted at 40 credits at each level (with the exception of level 5, where the core modules are weighted at 20 credits). To these, students may add a combination of 20-credit modules to make a level total of 120 credits. Module choice is offered at levels five and six, where students can specialise in their chosen genre, alongside literature modules of interest. The student journey for part-time students is negotiated on an individual basis to align with the personal circumstances of the student.

C=Core: compulsory; all other modules are optional.

**Level Four**

Beginning Writing (C) (40 credits)  
 Arguing about English (C) (40)  
 The Book Group & Curating Nottingham (C) (20)  
 Writing and Editing (C) (20)

**Level Five (first half year)**

Magazine Publishing: Concept to Dissemination (C) (20 credits)  
 Literary Cultures I (C) (20)  
 Options:  
 Writing Works (20)  
 Advanced Poetry (20)  
 The Anthology (20)

**Level Five (Second half year)**

Options:  
 Voices and Visions (20)  
 Writing for Short Film (20)  
 Digital Storytelling (20)  
 Black Writing in Britain (20)  
 or International Exchange

**Level Six**

Dissertation (C) (40 credits)  
 English and Creative Industries Project (optional / alternative) (40)  
 The Freelancer (20 credits)  
 Performance and Collaboration (20)  
 Travel Writing (20)  
 Postcolonial Texts: Narratives of Liberation (20)  
 American Specialisms (20)  
 Modernism and Modernity (20)  
 Nuclear Literature: Culture in the Atomic Age (20)

**11. Admission to the course**

### **Entry requirements.**

For current information regarding all entry requirements for this course, please see the 'Applying' tab on the NTU course information web page.

### **12. Support for learning**

All new students will be allocated a Personal Tutor who will remain in that role, where possible, throughout your three years with us. During Welcome Week you will meet your Personal Tutor, the other members of your tutor group and your student mentor, who will offer additional guidance during the early weeks of your course. At level four, there are eight tutor group meetings, two library sessions and three 1:1 meetings. At levels five and six there are one group meeting, one library session and four 1:1 meetings. The induction process will help you to settle in, and will provide sessions on the use of the library, on IT, on student support services and academic support, as well as course information. The Course Leader oversees all students enrolled on the Course. You are invited to see either your Personal Tutor or your Course Leader should you have problems that interfere with your academic progress. They can refer you on to more specialist help, if necessary. NOW (NTU Online Workspace), the university's virtual learning environment, provides access to a wealth of information to support your study.

There is a Course Learning Room on NOW, which provides information on the course structure and on support services, and a Resources for Creative Writing learning room, offering detailed information on the organisation of the subject; tips and advice on reading, research, structuring essays etc.; assessment criteria for portfolios, workshop etiquette and dissertations; and study guides on compiling a critical commentary, bibliography, etc. Module Learning Rooms provide information specific to module-based programmes of study, reading lists and other essential information. NOW can be accessed both on and off campus and is suitable for use on mobile platforms. There are numerous workstations on NTU campuses that are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, during term time. An extensive system of IT support is in place. Creative Writing and English staff are routinely available through their office hours system or via email to undertake one-to-one tutorials or to answer specific queries.

Academic Support is also available from the Academic Support team, which offers a lecture/workshop programme on study skills, essay writing, revision planning etc., and an appointment system for individual consultations. Student Support Services offer a comprehensive range of support including counsellors, mature student advice, financial advice, chaplains/religious advisors, and advisors on mental health. The Course team maintains good relations with Student Support Services and will refer you to them if necessary. You will have been referred to Disability Support if your application indicated that you would benefit from their services.

The Course Administrator is available to help with administrative issues. LLR (Library and Learning Resources) are in frequent contact with the course team through the subject specialist, who attends Course Committees and runs additional training sessions for Creative Writing students. The library is well-equipped, and offers extensive electronic learning resources, as well as a wide range of literary magazines. The Careers and

Employability team also maintains good links with Creative Writing and the specialist advisors deliver regular sessions on employability skills and career research both within the course and separately.

### 13. **Graduate destinations/employability**

Graduate employability is a key strategic aim of Nottingham Trent University, and this is reflected by the fact that NTU is consistently placed close to the top of the league tables of all UK Universities for graduate employment.

Our Creative Writing graduates will possess the academic and transferable skills which deliver the foundation for a successful career. As a Creative Writing graduate from Nottingham Trent, you will be well-prepared for a wide range of careers. Your use of 'Go Places' (PebblePad), your personal learning space which you will have been engaged with from Level 4, will provide you with a useful record of your achievements at university. You will have written and read widely and deeply, and will have developed a cultured and intelligent outlook, through becoming an accomplished writing practitioner. In practical terms, you will possess many of the attributes demanded in today's world of work: you will have further skills in research, organisation, team-working and time-management. Furthermore, you will be articulate, confident in your ability to make informed judgements, capable of marshalling complex information speedily and accurately, skilled in communicating your ideas to others concisely and persuasively. The skills and intellectual training provided by a degree in Creative Writing are valued by employers.

Creative Writing graduates from the single honours degree at Nottingham Trent will be well equipped to embark in careers in copywriting, publishing, freelancing, advertising, administration as well as roles in journalism and across the creative industries.

In addition, as a graduate from this course, you will be armed with the knowledge and skills needed to undertake further study at university, or within employer-led workplace courses.

A dedicated strand of modules or units within modules is designed to enhance employability through graduate-level professional roles undertaken on public-facing projects, ensuring that graduates from NTU are equipped to focus on employability, helping their potential to gain graduate jobs. In addition to the expertise available within the School of Arts and Humanities, the University has a comprehensive careers service open to all students to assist in securing employment. <http://www.ntu.ac.uk/careers>

### 14. **Course standards and quality**

Course standards are monitored in a variety of ways:

- A Course Committee, which includes membership from undergraduate students at all levels of study, monitors student feedback about the course and individual modules. It meets three times per year.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Student evaluation of modules is sought via module feedback questionnaires. The results of that feedback are published on NOW.</li> <li>· You will be provided with feedback on all assessed work.</li> <li>· The course has an External Examiner from another UK University who submits annual reports on the standards and quality of the course.</li> <li>· The subject benchmarks of the Quality Assurance Agency have been incorporated into the course's learning outcomes.</li> <li>· The quality of courses is regularly reviewed by the University as part of its quality assurance and enhancement processes.</li> </ul>
<p>15. <b>Assessment regulations</b> This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in Section 16 of the Quality Handbook). Any course specific assessment features are described below:</p>
<p>There are no course specific exceptions from the University's Common Assessment Regulations.</p>
<p>16. <b>Additional information</b> Collaborative partner(s): Course referenced to national (QAA) Benchmark Statements: <b>English Benchmark Statement 2015</b> Course recognised by: Date this course specification approved: <b>April 2018</b></p>
<p>Any additional information: In developing and delivering this course the team will draw on the expertise and facilities of Confetti Institute of Creative Technologies, Nottingham; Nottingham Contemporary and Totally Wired (reading series), Nottingham.</p>