

## 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) English FT/PT
4.	Normal Duration:	FT 3 years; PT 4-7 yrs
5.	UCAS Code:	Q300

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

This course aims to introduce students to a wide range of English texts in a lively and interrogative way. The English team is committed to high quality teaching and research and sees the synergy between the two as central to the delivery of the course. Thus the curriculum, while covering major literary movements and writers from the medieval period to the present day, is informed and refreshed by the research interests and discoveries of the team. The core modules, which are central to the course, encourage students to develop learning skills and a sound knowledge base through debate and discussion, through group work and through independent, autonomous research. These are accompanied by a range of optional modules from which students choose in order that they may specialise in the areas of English studies that they find most appealing.

The course also aims to equip students with the skills and competencies appropriate to English graduates. Students should emerge from the course confident, articulate, capable of expressing their own views clearly both in written and oral forms, and able to marshal large amounts of complex information speedily and effectively. They will have explored their own versatility, their ability to generate ideas and their ability to follow tasks through to completion. The combination of team-work, research skills and subject knowledge will enable students to evaluate their roles as team-workers, engage in moderate risk-taking and assess their own ability to take on new challenges. These combined qualities will equip students for most graduate careers.

In summary the course aims to:

- Attract high-calibre students irrespective of background, race or physical disability
- Provide students with a learning experience based substantially on independent learning, progressing through all levels to own-choice dissertation
- Provide students with the knowledge and skills identified nationally as central to the study of English

- Provide opportunities for students to pursue specialist interests in the English team's research strands (the Renaissance, Romanticism, American Literature, Gender and Sexuality, Postcolonial Writing, Literary Theory)
- Develop students' ability to understand and identify the transferable skills that they acquire
- Offer opportunities for study abroad
- Provide transferable and subject-specific skills that will aid career development and help prepare for postgraduate study and lifelong learning.

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:

- A1** apply critical understanding and knowledge of a wide and varied range of literary texts(B)
- A2** understand the complex nature of literary languages (B)
- A3** understand the relationship between literary texts and their historical and cultural locations (B)
- A4** have a critical awareness of past and current literary and theoretical approaches to texts (B)
- A5** compare, evaluate and debate theoretical viewpoints (B)
- A6** originate well-informed and substantiated literary arguments (B)
- A7** apply critical thinking and contextual information to the analysis of particular texts (B)
- A8** apply principles of reading and literary theory to textual analysis (B)
- A9** have a critical appreciation of the affective power of language and the function of the imagination (B)
- A10** understand a range of critical and editorial techniques (B)
- A11** understand the characteristics of a range of verbal and/or visual structures
- A12** understand the function of the active, creative imagination in the production of written texts
- A13** understand how reflective practitioner work in professional roles enhances graduate employability

**Skills, qualities and attributes**

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

- B1** demonstrate confidence in performing close textual analysis (B)
- B2** apply varied and relevant modes of evaluation to texts (B)
- B3** apply advanced literacy and communication skills to appropriate contexts (B)
- B4** use appropriate critical tools (B)
- B5** write clearly and logically (B)

- B6** present cogent and coherent written and/or oral arguments (B)
- B7** reason critically (B)
- B8** acquire substantial amounts of complex information quickly and systematically (B)
- B9** demonstrate independence of thought and judgement (B)
- B10** demonstrate time management and organisational skills (B)
- B11** demonstrate information technology skills: the ability to access, work with and evaluate electronic resources (B)
- B12** work in teams (B)
- B13** demonstrate an understanding of the developmental roles of autonomy, versatility and risk-taking, derived from a learning experience based substantially on reading and thinking beyond the confines of the taught curriculum
- B14** demonstrate research skills
- B15** respond creatively and imaginatively to research tasks
- B16** look beyond the immediate task to the wider context, including the social and commercial effects of your work (B)
- B17** write in a range of genres

The alphanumeric coding (A1, B3, etc) facilitates mapping of English Learning Outcomes; consult the full English Learning Outcomes map to find out which outcomes you should expect most directly to be addressed at each level of study.

**(B)**: indicates that the outcome has been mapped to the English Benchmark standard (2015). The English benchmark standards provide a national framework for describing the content and standards of a Bachelor's degree with honours in the discipline of English.

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-English-15.pdf>

## 8. **Teaching and learning methods**

In the majority of modules, your teaching and learning experience is based on lectures supported by smaller-group seminars, or interactive lectures, which rely on your participation through the development in class of pre-prepared material. You will encounter these forms of delivery, plus workshops and tutorials in your first year. All forms of teaching and learning offer you the opportunity to engage with debates and discussions that are central to the subject, and we expect you to become adept at being active learners while you become familiar with the subject at higher education level.

At levels five and six the emphasis falls more substantially on research and self-directed learning. You may be required to undertake team-based projects, for example, and you may also be asked to prepare brief reports and presentations. These will help you to develop the conceptual and debating skills that are crucial for English graduates at the same time as you explore the issues central to the subject.

At level six you will have the opportunity to direct your own research through the 40-credit dissertation or project. While you refine your research skills, this experience will also allow you to hone your skills in critical analysis via individual supervisory sessions, and your abilities in the construction and articulation of arguments. You will also choose from a range of modules based on the English team's research, which will extend your subject knowledge and allow you to participate in debates at the cutting edge of the discipline.

Learning and teaching support is comprehensive. All modules are supported by module documentation (in paper and/or online via NOW) 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.

Further support with study skills is available from the School's Academic Support advisor, who runs a regular series of lectures and workshops, and who is also available for individual consultation.

## 9. **Assessment methods**

The assessment policy for English is based around a programme of summative and formative assessment tasks. The summative tasks normally fall towards the end of the module, with the exception of 40-credit modules, which are assessed twice: once approximately half way through, and once towards the end. Formative assessments build up your skills and aptitudes in order to equip you for the tasks given a summative mark.

The main types of summative assessment are:

- Essay (to include the research essay)
- Examinations (which may be seen or unseen, supervised or in take-home format)
- Portfolios (consisting of a range of coursework exercises)
- Presentations

These assessment types are introduced at level 4 and become progressively more challenging at levels 5 and 6 (with the exception of presentations, which are built into formative tasks after level 4). The final-year Dissertation is the most extensive, exacting form of assessment, and this is supported by the level 5 core module, Culture and Anarchy. The attributes 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, via which you receive feedback on your progress. Through the development of your skills in formative tasks (which might include seminar presentations, critical reviews, bibliographical tasks, learning journals, online tasks) you should be ready to approach the summative tasks with confidence.

Assessment is co-ordinated between modules at all levels to ensure a degree of diversity, and to ensure progression. 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 examination papers and assessment policy more generally. All assessments are internally moderated to ensure fairness across module teams, and dissertations are marked independently by two separate examiners. Modules taken at level 6 are further moderated by Subject and Programme 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 either on a full-time (3 years) or a part-time (4-7 years) basis in which the first year is broadly foundational. 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 areas in which they have developed strong interests.

Level 4 introduces key concepts, issues and approaches to the study of English. These both provide a foundation for the rest of the degree, and introduce students to the areas that are central to the curriculum and that will be further developed at levels 5 and 6. Level 5, alongside the core module, Culture and Anarchy, offers

students a choice of modules that focus on periods in literary history. This is designed to give students greater insight into the relationship between text and context and concepts of periodicity as well as presenting key literary historical interactions that may or may not be part of what is understood to be in the canon of English Literature. At level 6 students again have a choice of modules, and are able to build on the issues that have interested them most at level 5 or explore new areas; at level 6 there is a greater emphasis on students engaging with the latest thinking in the field by taking modules that reflect tutors' research expertise. There are 'strands' that structure our curriculum (though these may be altered or added to according to changes in staffing within the team): the Renaissance, the Romantic era, Colonial and Postcolonial texts, Gender and Sexuality, American texts, Critical Theory, Creative and Professional Writing, and Employability. These provide the infrastructure for our modules at level 5 and are developed more explicitly at level 6.

Students have opportunities to enhance employability at levels 4, 5, and 6, with core and optional modules providing professional writing, reflection, and project work in professional roles.

Level 5 study is divided into two taught semesters so as to offer students the opportunity to choose one from three distinct Pathways in the second half of the academic year: the first allows students to consolidate and continue with subject-specific modules throughout the year; the second provides professional roles and output in preparation for employment; the third offers 'Study Abroad' opportunities at a number of overseas institutions. The 'Study Abroad' Pathway is managed by a dedicated course leader and administration team.

Students who do not complete the Honours course may receive a Certificate of Higher Education (120 credits, level 4) or a Diploma of Higher Education (240 credits, levels 4 and 5) or an Ordinary Degree (240 credits, levels 4 and 5 plus 60 credits at level 6).

C=compulsory; CF= core foundational; all other modules are optional.  
Not all optional modules will be offered in every year; the diet of modules that constitute English may be changed or added to from year to year.

<b>Level 4</b>	<b>cps</b>
• Literature: New Horizons (CF)	40
• Questioning the Canon (C)	40

- American Literature: Writing Self and Nation (C) 20
- The Book Group: Reading Texts in Small Groups and Curating Nottingham (C) 20

**Level 5**

**cps**

*[note: all students must take either Literary Cultures 1 or Literary Cultures 2, and may opt to take the other Literary Cultures module as an option]*

- Culture and Anarchy (C) 20
- Literary Cultures 1 (C/optional) 20
- Literary Cultures 2 (C/optional) 20
- Renaissance Literature 1485-1660: Shakespeare and his Contemporaries 20
- Romantic Revolutions 1780-1851 20
- The Anthology 20
- Black Writing in Britain 20
- Literature and Psychoanalysis 20
- Ethnicity in American Writing: Place, Identity and Form 20
- British Women Writers between the Wars (1918-1939) 20
- Writing Works 20
- Voices and Visions 20

**Level 6**

**cps**

*[note: all students must take just ONE of the 40-credit core modules]*

- The Dissertation (C) 40
- English and Creative Industries Project (C/alternative) 40
- Creative Writing Dissertation (C/alternative) 40
- Reading Gender and Sexuality 20
- Postcolonial Texts: Narratives of Liberation 20
- Travel Writing 20
- Early Modern Poetry and Prose 20
- American Specialisms 20
- Modernism and Modernity 20
- Literature in Theory: Writing, Technology, and the World 20
- Gothic Rebels and Reactionaries 20
- Nuclear Literatures 20

**University Languages Programme (ULP)**

Students may elect to replace one of their 20cp second half year elective modules with a year-long ULP module. If they are on exchange they may elect to commence a ULP module in their first half year, conduct further accredited study in the same language while overseas, and be credited with 20cp of ULP at the end of the year (replacing 20cp of study abroad).

At Level 6, students may elect to replace one 20cp elective module with a year-long ULP module.

#### 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**

There is a comprehensive Induction programme, which includes sessions on the use of the library, on IT, on student support services and academic support, as well as course information and additional lectures and workshops offering 'taster' sessions for English.

The Course Leader, aided by the Deputy Course Leader, oversees all students enrolled on the Course. You are invited to see either of these 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, which provides information on the course structure and on support services, and a Resources for English learning room, offering detailed information on the organisation of the subject; tips and advice on reading, research, structuring essays etc.; assessment criteria for exams, essays, presentations and dissertations; and study guides on referencing, compiling a 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. There are numerous workstations on campus that are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. An extensive system of IT support is in place.

English staff are routinely available through the 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 SSS 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 English students. The library is well-equipped, and offers extensive electronic learning resources.

The Careers and Employability team also maintains good links with English 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 fundamental to the strategic aim of Nottingham Trent University, as 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 English graduates possess the academic and transferable skills which provide the foundation for a successful career. As an English graduate from Nottingham Trent you will be well-prepared for a wide range of careers in both the public and private sectors. You will have read widely and deeply, and will have developed a cultured and intelligent outlook. In practical terms you will possess many of the attributes demanded in today's world of work: you will have 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 English are valued by employers. In recent years graduates from the single honours degree at Nottingham Trent have gone on to follow careers in marketing and retail, advertising, publishing, finance, public administration, management and the civil service as well as in education and journalism. In

addition, as a graduate from this course, you will be equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to undertake further study, either while at your place of employment (for professional and personal development) or at a university (for a higher degree).

A dedicated strand of modules or units within modules is designed to enhance employability through graduate-level professional roles undertaken on public-facing projects. This means that English 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
- Student evaluation of modules is sought via through module feedback questionnaires;
- You will be provided with feedback on all assessed work;
- The course has an External Examiner from another UK University who submits annual reports on the standards and quality of the course;
- The subject benchmarks of the Quality Assurance Agency have been incorporated into the course’s learning outcomes.
- The quality of courses is regularly reviewed by the University as part of its quality assurance and enhancement processes. The latest review of courses within the School of Arts and Humanities was in December 2015.

**15. Assessment regulations**

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:

There are no course specific exceptions from the University’s Common Assessment Regulations.

**16. Additional Information**

Collaborative partner(s):  
 Course referenced to Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Benchmark Statements:

**N/A**  
**English**

Course recognised by:  
Date this course specification  
approved:

**N/A**  
**September 2017**

Any additional information:

At present four prizes are awarded on an annual basis to graduating students (these may vary from year to year):

The Michael Klein Prize for the best performance in the study of American texts

The English Subject Prize

The Carcanet/PN Review Award for Creative Writing

The HopeRoad Prize for Postcolonial Literary Studies