

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes **Honours Degree programmes in English**. For Joint and Combined Honours Degree programmes, please also refer to the equivalent document(s) for the other subject(s). This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2010**.

The aims of all Honours Degree programmes in English are:

- to enable students to develop independent critical thinking and judgement;
- to engage students imaginatively in the process of reading and analysing literary texts;
- to encourage students to appreciate the expressive resources of language;
- to encourage students to reflect critically upon the act of reading;
- to promote an understanding of formal, generic and aesthetic aspects of literary texts;
- to promote the reading of Old English, Middle English and Renaissance texts in the original;
- to encourage an awareness of literature's historical dimension;
- to foster an awareness of contextual aspects of the production and determination of meaning;
- to develop a range of subject-specific and transferable skills;
- to provide a basis for further study in English or related disciplines, and a foundation of knowledge for teachers of English at all levels;
- to provide an intellectually stimulating and satisfying experience of studying;
- to encourage in students a sense of enthusiasm for the subject, and an appreciation of its continuing social and cultural importance;
- to encourage students to take progressive responsibility for their own study through negotiating subject areas of specialism with each other in seminars and study groups, through the informed choice of options, and through an extended piece of writing in the final year.

Programmes are delivered in three stages, each of which comprises one year of full-time study during which the student must follow courses to the value of four units (one unit is equivalent to 30 national credits). The programmes provide progressive structures in which students are able to gain ever-wider knowledge and understanding, and appropriate skills. The programmes contain a combination of compulsory core courses to introduce students to historical periods, to the principle literary genres, and to contemporary critical and theoretical approaches, with a range of stage two and three specialist options. In each case the structure encourages students, in stage two and three, to develop their own interests through informed choice among specialist options. In stage three all students are required to write a dissertation and/or long essays. The programmes aim to produce graduates with a range of personal attributes relevant to the world beyond HE, who are able to engage in lifelong learning, to consider ethics and values, and to contribute to the wider community.

Further information

[Learning outcomes](#)

[Teaching, learning and assessment](#)

[Details of the programme structure\(s\)](#)

[Progression and award requirements](#)

[Student support and guidance](#)

[Admission requirements](#)

[Further learning and career opportunities](#)

[Indicators of quality and standards](#)

[List of programmes, with details of awards, degree titles, accreditation and teaching arrangements](#)

This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a

specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

### **Learning outcomes**

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff, particularly in the areas of Old English and Medieval literature; Shakespeare and Renaissance literature; eighteenth and nineteenth-century literature; modern and post-modern literature; literary theory; drama and poetry from all periods. In general terms, the programmes provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

- English literature from the 9<sup>th</sup> Century to the present day or from the 15<sup>th</sup> Century to the present day, depending on exact programme taken by student;
- the principal literary genres (fiction, poetry and drama);
- creativity and expressivity in literary forms and language;
- a range of contemporary critical and theoretical approaches to English literature;
- advanced scholarship in chosen areas of the discipline;
- appropriate critical and theoretical terminology;
- a range of relevant linguistic, literary, cultural and socio-historical contexts in which literature is written and read;
- literature's relations to cultural change;
- some of literature's relations to other disciplines and forms of knowledge.

#### *Skills and other attributes*

- critical skills in close reading, the analysis and critical interpretation of text and data;
- sensitivity and responsiveness to language and literary form and an understanding of generic conventions;
- the ability to evaluate relevant critical, theoretical and contextual research;
- the ability to conduct literary research independently using traditional and electronic resources;
- the ability to articulate knowledge and the understanding of texts, concepts and theories relating to English literature;
- command of a wider vocabulary and appropriate critical and theoretical terminology;
- bibliographical skills appropriate to the subject including accurate citation of sources and consistent use of conventions in the presentation of scholarly work;
- judging and evaluating evidence;
- assessing the merits of competing theories, explanations and interpretations;
- analysing and interpreting bodies of information;
- abstracting and synthesising information;
- developing a reasoned argument;
- planning and execution of essays and project-work;
- developing habits of reflection on reading, learning and of study, learning and research;\*
- listening to, and learning from, criticism;\*
- advanced written and oral communication skills;\*
- the ability to present logical and coherent written and oral arguments of varying lengths;\*
- the capacity to analyse and critically examine diverse forms of discourse;\*
- the ability to organise and interpret complex information in a structured and systematic way;\*
- the ability to comprehend and develop sophisticated concepts;\*
- the capacity for independent thought and judgement;\*
- skills in critical reasoning;\*
- information technology skills (including word processing, email and WWW);\*
- information handling and retrieval skills (including the use of online computer searches); identifying, retrieving, sorting and exchanging information; investigating a wide range of sources;\*
- the ability to engage with the textual use of new media, video, TV, DVD and electronic;
- interpersonal skills, involving recognising and respecting the viewpoints of others;\*
- time management and organisational skills including working to deadlines, prioritising tasks, organising work-time.\*
- In addition, this programme fosters the development of a range of personal attributes that are important in the world of work, and that strengthen the graduates' abilities to engage in lifelong learning and contribute to the wider community. These include: personal motivation; the ability to

work autonomously and with others; self-awareness and self-management; empathy and insight; intellectual integrity; awareness of responsibility as a local, national and international citizen; interest in lifelong learning; flexibility and adaptability; creativity.\*

\* transferable skills

[Back to top](#)

### **Teaching, learning and assessment**

Teaching and learning is mostly by means of lectures; seminars; study groups; essay consultations; oral presentations and guided independent study. Assessment of knowledge and understanding is typically by formal examinations, coursework, examined essays, translation exercises, online tests and exercises, oral presentations and the dissertation or long essay. In addition, students may be involved in workshops and may produce various forms of creative or editorial work. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the [Department](#).

[Back to top](#)

### **Details of the programme structure(s)**

Please note that the list of available optional courses offered is subject to change and not all courses run each year. A full list of courses for the current academic year can be obtained from the [Department](#).

#### Single Honours Degree programmes

##### **Stage one:**

Students must take:

- EN1001 Introduction to Medieval Literature (1 unit)
- EN1106 Shakespeare (1 unit)
- EN1107 Inventing the Novel (1 unit)
- EN1112 Introducing English Poetry (1 unit)

Part time students must take:

##### **Stage one (a):**

Two of the following in consecutive terms, as timetabled:

- EN1001 Introduction to Medieval Literature (1 unit)
- EN1106 Shakespeare (1 unit)
- EN1107 Inventing the Novel (1 unit)
- EN1112 Introducing English Poetry (1 unit)

##### **Stage one (b):**

The remaining two of the following, in consecutive terms:

- EN1001 Introduction to Medieval Literature (1 unit)
- EN1106 Shakespeare (1 unit)
- EN1107 Inventing the Novel (1 unit)
- EN1112 Introducing English Poetry (1 unit)

##### **Stage two:**

Students must take three of the following:

- EN2010 Renaissance (1 unit)
- EN2212 Victorian Literature (1 unit)
- EN2213 Romantic Literature (1 unit)
- EN2324 Debates in Literary and Critical Theory (1 unit)
- EN2325 Modernist Literature (1 unit)

and choose options equal to the value of 1 full unit from a list of Stage two courses offered by the Department.

Over their second and third years, students must take at least one Medieval half unit and one whole unit or two half units focusing on literature from 1550-1780 (excluding Shakespeare).

Part time students must take:

**Stage two (a):**

One or two of the following (out of a total of three to be chosen over stages (a) and (b)):

- EN2010 Renaissance (1 unit)
- EN2212 Victorian Literature (1 unit)
- EN2213 Romantic Literature (1 unit)
- EN2324 Debates in Literary and Critical Theory (1 unit)
- EN2325 Modernist Literature (1 unit)

and, if choosing only one of the above, choose options equal to the value of 1 full unit from a list of Stage two courses offered by the Department. Over the course of Stage two and Stage three, students must take at least one Medieval half unit and one whole unit or two half units focusing on literature from 1550-1780 (excluding Shakespeare).

**Stage two (b):**

One or two of the following (to make up the required total of three)

- EN2010 Renaissance (1 unit)
- EN2212 Victorian Literature (1 unit)
- EN2213 Romantic Literature (1 unit)
- EN2324 Debates in Literary and Critical Theory (1 unit)
- EN2325 Modernist Literature (1 unit)

and, if choosing only one of the above, choose options equal to the value of 1 full unit from a list of Stage two courses offered by the Department. Over the course of Stage two and Stage three, students must take at least one Medieval half unit and one whole unit or two half units focusing on literature from 1550-1780 (excluding Shakespeare).

**Stage three:**

Students must take three units from the range of options offered by the Department in any of the following three areas:

- a) Special Author Project (1 unit);
- b) Special Topic (1 unit) and
- c) Dissertation (1 unit). Only one Dissertation is permitted. To be entered for the dissertation, students must achieve an average of 63% or higher in Stage Two.

In addition students must also choose options equal to the value of one full unit from the list of Stage three courses offered by the Department. If not already completed in Stage Two, the requirement for at least one Medieval half unit and one whole unit or two half units focusing on literature from 1550-1780 (excluding Shakespeare) must be completed in Stage Three.

Part time students must take:

**Stage three (a):**

One or two units (out of a total of three to be chosen over stages (a) and (b)) from the range of options offered by the Department within the following two areas:

- a) Special Author Project (1 unit);
- b) Special Topic (1 unit)

and, if choosing only one of the above, choose options equal to the value of one full unit from the list of Stage three courses offered by the Department. If not already completed in Stage Two, the requirement for at least one Medieval half unit and one whole unit or two half units focusing on literature from 1550-1780 (excluding Shakespeare) must be completed in Stage Three.

**Stage three (b):**

One or two units (to make up the required total of three) from the range of options offered by the Department within the following three areas:

- a) Special Author Project (1 unit);
- b) Special Topic (1 unit)
- c) Dissertation (1 unit). Only one Dissertation is permitted. To be entered for the dissertation, students must achieve an average of 63% or higher in Stage Two.

and, if choosing only one of the above, choose options equal to the value of one full unit from the list of Stage three courses offered by the Department. If not already completed in Stage Two and Stage Three (a), the requirement for at least one Medieval half unit and one whole unit or two half units focusing on literature from 1550-1780 (excluding Shakespeare) must be completed in Stage Three (b).

Joint Honours Degree programmes with English as an equal component:

Students take the following courses in the English Department:

**Stage one:**

Students must take:

EN1107 Inventing the Novel (1 unit)

EN1112 Introducing English Poetry (1 unit)

and specified courses in the other subject.

**Stage two:**

Students must take one of the following:

a) EN1001 Medieval Literature (1 unit) or

b) EN1106 Shakespeare (1 unit)

and choose options equal to the value of 1 full unit from a list of Stage two courses offered by the Department. Over their second and third years, students must take at least one half unit focusing on Medieval literature or literature from before 1780 (excluding Shakespeare) plus specified courses in the other subject.

Except for students taking English and Drama (QW34), who take two dedicated stage two core courses:

DT2091 Shakespeare from Page to Stage (1 unit)

EN2324 Debates in Literary and Critical Theory (1 unit)

and choose options equal to the value of 1 full unit from a list of Stage two courses offered by the Department, plus specified courses equal to the value of 1 full unit from Drama & Theatre.

**Stage three:**

Students must take:

One unit from the range of options offered by the Department within the following three areas:

a) Special Author Project (1 unit);

b) Special Topic (1 unit)

c) Dissertation (1 unit). To be entered for the dissertation, students must achieve an average of 63% or higher in Stage Two

In addition students must also choose options equal to the value of one full unit from the list of Stage three courses offered by the Department and choose options equal to the value of two full units from the other Department. If not already completed in Stage Two, the requirement for at least one half unit focusing on Medieval literature or literature from before 1780 (excluding Shakespeare) must be completed in Stage Three.

Except for students taking English and Drama (QW34), who take one unit from either:

a) Special Author Project (1 unit);

b) Special Topic (1 unit) and

c) Dissertation (1 unit). To be entered for the dissertation, students must achieve an average of 63% or higher in Stage Two

and a dedicated pathway course and choose options equal to the value of 1 full unit from a list of Stage two and three courses offered by the Department, plus specified courses equal to the value of 1 full unit from Drama & Theatre.

Combined Honours Degree programmes with English as major component

Students take the following courses in the English Department:

**Stage one:**

Students must take:

EN1107 Inventing the Novel (1 unit)

EN1112 Introducing English Poetry (1 unit)

EN1001 Introduction to Medieval Literature (1 unit)

plus a specified course to the value of 1 full unit in the other subject.

**Stage two**

Students must take EN2324 Debates in Literary and Critical Theory (1 unit) and one of the following:

EN2010 Renaissance (1 unit)

EN2212 Victorian Literature (1 unit)

EN2213 Romantic Literature (1 unit)

EN2325 Modernist Literature (1 unit)

and two options to the value of 1 full unit from a list of Stage two courses offered by the Department plus an option in the other subject to the value of 1 full unit. Over their second and third years, students must take at least one half unit focusing on Medieval literature or literature from before 1780 (excluding Shakespeare).

### **Stage three:**

Students must take two units from the range of options offered by the Department within the following three areas:

a) Special Author Project (1 unit)

b) Special Topic (1 unit)

c) Dissertation (1 unit). To be entered for the dissertation, students must achieve an average of 63% or higher in Stage Two

In addition students must also choose one further unit from the range of Stage three whole or half units offered by the Department plus an option in the other subject to the value of 1 full unit. If not already completed in Stage Two, the requirement for at least one half unit focusing on Medieval literature or literature from before 1780 (excluding Shakespeare) must be completed in Stage Three.

[Back to top](#)

### **Progression and award requirements**

The progression and award requirements are essentially the same across all Honours Degree programmes at Royal Holloway. Students must pass units to the value of at least three units on each stage of the programme. On some programmes there may be a requirement to pass specific courses in order to progress to the next stage, or to qualify for a particular degree title (see programme structure). Students are considered for the award and classified on the basis of a weighted average. This is calculated from marks gained in courses taken in stages two and three, and gives twice the weighting to marks gained in stage three. In order to qualify for the award, students must gain a weighted average of at least 35%.

In addition, with effect from September 2010, all first year students on single, joint or combined honours programmes offered by the Department of English are required to pass a Moodle-based writing skills quiz in order to progress into the second year of study. The pass mark for the test is 60%. Certificates of Merit are awarded to students who achieve at least 80% in the quiz. Students may attempt the quiz as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who meet the requirements for progression as stipulated in the [College's Undergraduate Regulations](#) (Section: *Conditions for progression to the next stage*) but fail to pass the Moodle-based quiz will not be permitted to progress into their second year of academic study at the College.

[Back to top](#)

### **Student support and guidance**

- Personal Advisers: All students are allocated a personal adviser who meets with them regularly through the programme. The adviser's role is to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues. Students meet with their personal advisers two or three times during the first term. Subsequently, responsibility for meetings is placed on the student.
- The Year Tutor is at the centre of the Department's student support systems. Year Tutors are available for academic, pastoral and welfare advice. They play a pro-active role in all three areas. They are in regular communication with students, course leaders, seminar leaders, the administrator and the Programme Co-ordinator.
- The Programme Co-ordinator and the administrator provide a back-up system of academic, pastoral and welfare advice. They also monitor Year Tutors, personal advisers, course leaders and seminar leaders.
- All staff available and accessible through dedicated office hours system.
- Detailed student handbook and course resources.
- Departmental reading room, with collection of articles and books supporting teaching and learning.
- Extensive supporting materials and learning resources in College libraries and Computer Centre.
- College Careers Service and Departmental Careers Service liaison officer.

- Access to all College and University support services, including Student Counselling Service, Health Centre and the Educational Support Office for students with special needs.
- Representation on the Student-Staff Committee.

[Back to top](#)

### **Admission requirements**

The Department's standard conditional offer is available on the [Course Catalogue](#) web page. However, the Department also has considerable flexibility in its admissions and offers policy and strongly encourages applications from non-standard applicants. Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. It may also be helpful to contact the [Admissions Office](#) for specific guidance on the entrance requirements for particular programmes.

[Back to top](#)

### **Further learning and career opportunities**

Graduates from English programmes have successfully progressed into a wide range of professions which include: Broadcast Researcher, Newspaper Reporter, Live TV Subtitled, Publishing Assistant, Publishing Rights Assistant, Press Officer, Advertising for Financial Times, Advertising Operations Co-ordinator for Yahoo UK & Ireland, Marketing Trainee for Unilever, Marketing Assistant for Publishing Company, Fundraiser for English National Opera, HR Administrator, Recruitment Consultant, Bookseller, Assistant Manager of a Clothing Company, Local Council Housing Management, Council Education Welfare Assistant, Officer Cadet, Trainee Chartered Accountant, Auditor, Trainee Mortgage Broker, Management Consultant for IBM, Web Writer, Service Analyst for IBM, Assistant Librarian at Surrey Institute of Art, Vice President RHUL Student Union, Researcher for Chartered Institute of Building.

Other graduates have continued with further studies including vocational courses such as PGCE's for teaching, journalism courses, training at Drama School, Law conversion courses and Postgraduate Studies, mainly Masters in English but also in other subjects including Film and Philosophy. For further details please refer to the [Careers Service](#).

[Back to top](#)

### **Indicators of quality and standards**

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The new scoring system for the RAE 2008 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4\* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour. 60% of the College's research profile is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent outperforming the national average of 50%. The College is ranked 16th in the UK for research of 4\* standard and 18th for 3\* and 4\* research. All staff in the English Department are highly regarded scholars, writers and critics and the quality of our research was recognised in the most recent Research Assessment Exercise, where ninety percent of our research was found to be of international quality. We also host the national English Subject centre, which drives innovation and improvement in teaching and learning across English studies.

[Back to top](#)

### **List of programmes**

All the programmes are taught by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and lead to awards of the University of London. Programmes in English are not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The QAA subject benchmark statement in English describes the general features which one might expect from Honours Degree programmes in the subject, and can therefore be used as a point of reference when reading this document (see [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)). UCAS codes are given in parentheses (see [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)).

## **Single Honours Degree programmes in English**

BA English (Q300)      Available Full Time or Part Time

## **Joint Honours Degree programmes with English as an equal component**

BA English and Classical Studies (QQ38)  
BA English and Creative Writing (QW38)  
BA English and Drama (QW34)  
BA English and French (QR31)  
BA English and German (QR32)  
BA English and Italian (QR33)  
BA English and Latin (QQ36)  
BA English and Spanish (QR34)  
BA English and Philosophy (QV35)  
BA Comparative Literature & Culture & English (QQ23)

## **Combined Honours Degree programmes with English as a major component**

BA English with Philosophy (Q3V5)

[Back to top](#)