Royal Holloway, University of London
Course specification for a postgraduate award
MA English Literature (2245)

Section 1 – Introduction to your course

This course specification is a formal document, which provides a summary of the main features of your course and the learning outcomes that you might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if you take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. Further information is contained in the University prospectus, and in various handbooks, all of which you will be able to access online. Alternatively, further information on the University's academic regulations and policies can be found here. Further information on the University's Admissions Policy can be found here.

Your degree course in MA English Literature provides progressive structures in which you will be able to gain ever-wider knowledge and understanding, and appropriate skills. Your course contains a combination of mandatory modules to introduce you to historical periods, to the principal literary genres, and to contemporary critical and theoretical approaches, with a range of specialist options. With a wide range of expertise in the department, you have the option to choose units from the MA in Medieval Studies, MA in Victorian Literature, Art and Culture and other specialist options including 'Modernist and Contemporary Literature' or 'Shakespeare's King Lear: Critical Debates and Creative Response'. The course is ideal if you are interested in more than one period of English literature, or if you want to combine or juxtapose the literatures and genres of different periods.

While Royal Holloway keeps all the information made available under review, courses and the availability of individual modules, especially optional modules are necessarily subject to change at any time, and you are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect your decision to follow a specific course. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform you as soon as is practicable of any significant changes which might affect your studies.

The following is a brief description for some of the most important terminology for understanding the content of this document:

Degree course – Also referred to as 'programme', this term refers to the qualification you will be awarded upon successful completion of your studies. 'Courses' were formerly known as 'programmes' at Royal Holloway.
Module – This refers to the credits you will study each year to complete your degree course. Postgraduate taught degrees at Royal Holloway comprise 180 credits. On some degree courses a certain number of optional modules must be passed for a particular degree title. 'Modules' were formerly known as 'course units' at Royal Holloway.

Section 2 – Course details			
Date of specification update	May 2024	Location of study	Egham
Course award and title	MA English Literature	Level of study	Postgraduate
Course code	2245	Year of entry	2025/26
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department or school	Department of English	Other departments or schools involved in teaching the course	
Mode(s) of attendance	Full time and part time	Duration of the course	One year (52 weeks) full-time Two to five years (104 - 260 weeks) part-time
Accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirement(s)	N/A		
Link to Coursefinder for further information:	https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/	For queries on admissions:	https://royalholloway.ac.uk/applicationquery

Section 3 – Degree course structure				
3.1 Mandatory module information **The following table summarises the mandatory modules which students must take in each year of study**				
Module code	**Module title**	**Credits**	**FHEQ level**	**Module status (Mandatory Condonable MC or Mandatory Non-Condonable MNC**
EN5230	Dissertation – English Literature	60	7	MC

This table sets out the most important information for the mandatory modules on your degree course. These modules are central to achieving your learning outcomes, so they are compulsory, and all students on your degree course will be required to take them. You will be automatically registered for these modules each year. Mandatory modules fall into two categories: 'condonable' or 'non-condonable'.

In the case of mandatory 'non-condonable' (MNC) modules, you must pass the module before you can proceed to the next year of your course, or to successfully graduate with a particular degree title. In the case of mandatory 'condonable' (MC) modules, these must be taken but you can still progress or graduate even if you do not pass them. Please note that although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, changes to your degree course may be made where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events. For example, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of external advisors, to enhance academic provision.

3.2 Optional modules

In addition to mandatory modules, there may be a number of optional modules available during the course of your degree. Although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, new options may be offered, or existing ones may be withdrawn. For example, where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of External Advisors, to enhance academic provision. There may be additional requirements around option selection; please contact the Department for further information.

Students can choose 120 credits from the modules made available by the Department on an annual basis and are advised to take EN5001 Methods and Materials of Research.

Section 4 - Progressing through each year of your degree course

For further information on the progression and award requirements for your degree, please refer to Royal Holloway's Academic Regulations.

Progression throughout the year/s is monitored through performance in summative or formative coursework assignments. Please note that if you hold a Student Visa and you choose to leave (or are required to leave because of non-progression) or complete early (before the course end date stated on your CAS), then this will be reported to UKVI.

All postgraduate taught students are required to take and pass the non-credit bearing Moodle-based Academic Integrity module SS1001 in order to be awarded. The pass mark for the module assessment is stated in the on-line Academic Integrity Moodle module. Students may attempt the assessment as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who otherwise meet the requirements for award as stipulated in the Academic Taught Regulations but fail to pass the Moodle-based Academic Integrity module will not be awarded.

Part-time students normally take two 30 credit modules, and are advised to take the optional 'Methods and Materials of Research' course in their first year. In the second year they would normally take two 30 credit modules, plus the dissertation.

Section 5 – Educational aims of the course

The aims of this course are to:
- to promote the study of literary texts and topics more closely and comprehensively than is possible at undergraduate level;
- to provide a flexible and progressive structure in which students can acquire understanding and appropriate skills relating to a range of literary fields at an advanced level;
- to provide a flexible and progressive structure which allows work to be done across period boundaries thereby encouraging intellectual synergies to develop;
- to provide an advanced introduction to the theoretical issues animating critical debates in literary studies;
- to provide training in research techniques in the field of study;
- to foster an independent learning ability;
- to develop key communications, IT and management skills relevant for postgraduate work.

Section 6 - Course learning outcomes

In general terms, the courses provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. (*Categories – Knowledge and understanding (K), Skills and other attributes (S), and Transferable skills (*))*

Course Learning Outcome	Term 1 and 2	Term 3 and Summer
Graduates from this course will undertake **knowledge discovery, information synthesis, and analysis.**	Students will be able to engage critically with a range of sources (primary and secondary) that currently inform the discipline and study of English literature.	Students will be able to engage critically with a range of sources (primary and secondary) that currently inform the discipline and study of English literature.
Graduates from this course will undertake **knowledge discovery, information synthesis, and analysis.**	Students will be able to demonstrate a critical understanding of key concepts, theories, methodologies, and debates that currently inform the discipline and study of English literature.	Students will be able to demonstrate a critical understanding of key concepts, theories, methodologies, and debates that currently inform the discipline and study of English literature.
Graduates from this course will undertake **knowledge discovery, information synthesis, and analysis** and demonstrate **personal responsibility.**	Students will be able to retrieve and select relevant information from a range of sources, by following guidance and through initiative and personal responsibility.	Students will be able to retrieve and select relevant information from a range of sources, by following guidance and through initiative and personal responsibility.
Graduates from this course will undertake **knowledge discovery, information synthesis, and analysis**, and demonstrate **collaboration, curiosity, and peer learning**.	Students will be able to evaluate complex literary issues, making sound academic judgements informed by current critical debates and in response to conversations and debates with peers.	Students will be able to evaluate complex literary issues, making sound academic judgements informed by current critical debates and in response to conversations and debates with peers.
Graduates from this course will undertake **knowledge discovery, information synthesis, and analysis**, and demonstrate **competency in communication**.	Students will be able to use a variety of software platforms, demonstrating competency with digital tools and/or electronic resources when conducting research and communicating ideas.	Students will be able to use a variety of software platforms, demonstrating competency with digital tools and/or electronic resources when conducting research and communicating ideas.
Graduates from this course will undertake **knowledge discovery, information synthesis, and analysis,** demonstrate **competency in communication,** and be **mindful of others, acting with inclusion and empathy**.	Students will be able to structure and communicate their ideas in writing or other forms (e.g. oral, digital, creative), producing arguments that are supported by the analysis of relevant evidence. They will also be able to respond respectfully and thoughtfully to ideas presented by their teachers and peers.	
Graduates from this course will demonstrate **personal responsibility.**		Students will be able to demonstrate self-direction in tackling and solving set tasks; they will be able to act autonomously when it comes to planning and carrying out their assignments, including designing and completing an original extended piece of independent research (dissertation; final project).

Graduates from this course will undertake **knowledge discovery, information synthesis, and analysis**, and demonstrate **competency in communication**.	Students will be able to develop advanced skills of language use and language analysis.	Students will be able to develop advanced skills of language use and language analysis.
Graduates from this course will demonstrate **personal responsibility**, and **competency in communication**.	Authentic assessment: Students will be able to design and develop topics and projects that reflect their interests, in consultation with their teachers.	Authentic assessment: Students will be able to design and develop topics and projects that reflect their interests, in consultation with their teachers.
Graduates from this course will undertake **knowledge discovery, information synthesis, and analysis**.		Students will be able to apply and integrate feedback from previous written assessments and learning activities into their assessed work, demonstrating the capacity for improvement and progression.
Graduates from this course will undertake **knowledge discovery, information synthesis, and analysis**.	Students will be able to understand the role of media landscapes, creative practice and/or digital narratives in the production of literary and cultural experience (e.g. print, manuscript, performance, music, painting, multi-media platforms).	
Graduates from this course will undertake **knowledge discovery, information synthesis, and analysis**.	Students will be able to understand the relationship between historical/cultural change and the creation and consumption of literature.	

Section 7 - Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning on your course is closely informed by the active research of staff, particularly in the areas of medieval studies, early modern literature including Shakespeare, Victorian literature, Modernist literature and contemporary and postcolonial literature. In general terms, the course provides an opportunity for you to develop and demonstrate the learning outcomes detailed herein.

Teaching and learning is mostly by means of small-group seminars, study groups, essay consultations, oral presentations and guided independent study. Assessment of knowledge and understanding is typically by 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.

Contact hours come in various forms and may take the form of time spent with a member of staff in a lecture or seminar with other students. Contact hours may also be laboratory or, studio-based sessions, project supervision with a member of staff, or discussion through a virtual learning environment (VLE). These contact hours may be with a lecturer or teaching assistant, but they may also be with a technician, or specialist support staff.

The way in which each module on your degree course is assessed will also vary. Assessments designated as 'summative' will receive a mark which will count towards your overall mark for the module, and potentially your degree classification, depending on your year of study. On successful completion of the module, you will gain the credits listed.

More detailed information on modules, including teaching and learning methods, and methods of assessment, can be found via the online Module Catalogue. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed regularly by the university, and may also be checked routinely by external agencies.

Section 8 – Additional costs

There are no single associated costs greater than £50 per item on this degree course.

These estimated costs relate to studying this particular degree course at Royal Holloway. General costs such as accommodation, food, books and other learning materials and printing etc., have not been included, but further information is available on our website.

Section 9 – Indicators of quality and standards	
QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	7
Your course is designed in accordance with the FHEQ to ensure your qualification is awarded on the basis of nationally established standards of achievement, for both outcomes and attainment. The qualification descriptors within the FHEQ set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of individual qualifications. The qualification descriptors contained in the FHEQ exemplify the outcomes and attributes expected of learning that results in the award of higher education qualifications. These outcomes represent the integration of various learning experiences resulting from designated and coherent courses of study.	
QAA Subject benchmark statement(s)	http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of courses in a specific subject or subject area. They also represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in terms of the attributes and capabilities that those possessing qualifications should have demonstrated.	

Section 10– Intermediate exit awards (where available)		
You may be eligible for an intermediate exit award if you complete part of the course as detailed in this document. Any additional criteria (e.g. mandatory modules, credit requirements) for intermediate awards is outlined in the sections below.		
Award	Criteria	Awarding body
PG Diploma	Passes in at least 120 credits, with fails of between 40% to 49% for up to 40 credits condonable (with the exception of any course specific requirements).	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College
PG Certificate	Passes in at least 60 credits with no condonable fails	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College