

**BA English Literature**  
**For students entering Part 1 in 2009/0**

**UCAS code: Q300**

|   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Awarding Institution:                       | University of Reading       |
| Teaching Institution:                       | University of Reading       |
| Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s): | English                     |
| Faculty:                                    | Arts and Humanities Faculty |
| Programme length:                           | 3 years                     |
| Date of specification:                      | 11/Apr/2011                 |
| Programme Director:                         | Dr Andy Nash                |
| Programme Advisor:                          |                             |
| Board of Studies:                           | English                     |
| Accreditation:                              |                             |

**Summary of programme aims**

The programme aims to provide students with subject-specific knowledge and more general skills, including knowledge of a variety of different kinds of literary texts, from a range of periods, as well as perspectives on different methods of critical analysis. The course also aims to foster an independent approach to formulating problems and arguments, using the close reading and analytical skills that are fundamental to the discipline.

**Transferable skills**

During the course of their studies at Reading, all students will be expected to enhance their academic and personal transferable skills in line with the University's Strategy for Learning and Teaching. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop such skills, in particular relating to communication, interpersonal skills, learning skills, numeracy, self-management, use of IT and problem-solving and will have been encouraged to further develop and enhance the full set of skills through a variety of opportunities available outside their curriculum.

Students on this programme are also expected to have gained experience and show competence in the following transferable skills: fluency in writing and oral communication, the ability to formulate and evaluate their own arguments and those of others, to translate subject-specific knowledge and skills to new environments, the ability to find and use relevant information resources, to manage their time effectively, and to work co-operatively with others.

**Programme content**

Part 1 of the English Literature degree introduces students to debate about approaches to the study of literature, through critical and research exercises and close study of selected texts from a number of different periods. Part 2 provides greater breadth of coverage, and studies texts within historical periods and generic traditions. At Part 3 students have the opportunity of more specialized and independent literary study, choosing their modules from a wide range of options.

Each Part of the degree programme comprises 120 credits. In Part 1, students take 60 credits in English Literature, while the remaining 60 credits are made up from modules elsewhere in the University. In Parts 2 and 3 they must normally take a minimum of 100 English Literature credits in each year, and, in consultation with their programme adviser, may take up to 20 credits from modules available elsewhere in the University.

**Part 1 (three terms)**

*Compulsory modules*

|        |                               |    |   |
|--------|-------------------------------|----|---|
| EN1LL  | Languages of Literature       | 20 | 4 |
| EN1REE | Researching the English Essay | 20 | 4 |
| EN1WKT | What Kind of Text is This?    | 20 | 4 |

**Part 2 (three terms)**

*Compulsory modules*

|        |                          |    |   |
|--------|--------------------------|----|---|
| EN2CMS | Career Management Skills | 5  | 5 |
| EN2CRI | Critical Issues          | 20 | 5 |

Students choose five 20-credit modules from an approved list of options. At least two modules must be from a list of pre-1800 modules. A complete list of options is available from the Programme Director and in the English Part 2 Module Supplement. Admission to optional modules will be at the discretion of the Programme Director.

With permission from the Programme Director, students may choose to replace one English Literature module with a module or modules totalling 20 credits from outside the programme.

### **The Careers Management Skills module is a compulsory part of the level 5 programme**

#### **Part 3 (three terms)**

##### *Compulsory modules*

| <i>Mod Code</i> | <i>Module Title</i> | <i>Credits</i> | <i>Level</i> |
|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------|
| EN3DIS          | Dissertation        | 40             | 6            |

In addition, students choose four optional 20-credit modules, two in each term, to make a total of 80 credits.

Optional modules: A complete list of options is available from the Programme Director and can also be found in the English Part 3 Module Supplement. Admission to optional modules will be at the discretion of the Programme Director.

All students have the opportunity to pursue a placement option as part of any Part 3 English Literature module.

#### **Progression requirements**

To proceed from Part 1 to Part 2, students must obtain:

- an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1, where all the credits are at C level or above;
- a mark of at least 40% in all English Literature modules;
- a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits taken in Part 1.

To proceed from Part 2 to Part 3, students must obtain

- an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2;
- a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits taken in Part 2.

#### **Summary of Teaching and Assessment**

Teaching is through seminars, lectures and individual essay feedback. In addition the Dissertation module is supported by workshops and individual supervision. Over the programme as a whole, assessment will be conducted through a mixture of assessed essays and formal examination. The conventions for classification are included in the Programme Handbook, but you should note that the weighting between Part 2 and Part 3 for classification purposes is 33% and 67%.

#### **Admission requirements**

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:

UCAS Tariff: 320-340 points including 120 in English Literature or English Language and Literature

Scottish or Irish Highers: ABBBB (A in English Literature)

International Baccalaureate: 32 points with 6 or 7 for Higher level English Literature

GCSE/O English Language preferred: grade C or above.

All applications are considered on their individual merits. Mature candidates will usually be expected to have a B (100 points) at A Level English Literature, or equivalent qualification. Consideration is also given to applicants with other qualifications and experience.

**Admissions Tutor:** Mrs Carolyn Lyle

#### **Support for students and their learning**

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support is provided by a wide array of services across the University, including: the University Library, the Student Employment, Experience and Careers Centre (SEEC), In-session English Support Programme, the Study Advice and Mathematics Support Centre teams, IT Services and the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@il) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students

studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and advisers in the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and offers advice on accommodation, careers, disability, finance, and wellbeing. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions and runs workshops and seminars on a range of topics. For more information see [www.reading.ac.uk/student](http://www.reading.ac.uk/student)

The Department of English and American Literature also offers students specific help to improve and develop their essay writing skills through the Royal Literary Fund Fellowship scheme, which provides a resident professional writer whose role is to advise students individually, from first-year to postgraduate level, on raising the level of their academic writing.

Students in the Department of English and American Literature receive a Handbook which gives details of the Programme, guidance on study skills such as note-taking and essay writing, and information about staff, facilities, and sources of specialized help within the University, such as the Study Advice Team and the Counselling Service. The English programme is designed to give students extensive teaching support in Part 1 leading to more independent work in Part 3. Academic feedback and guidance is given through one-to-one essay tutorials, and academic and personal support is provided through the tutor system and the University's Personal and Academic Record (PAR) Scheme. Dissertation workshops prepare students for the Part 3 dissertation which is individually supervised. The Geoffrey Matthews Collection, housed in the department, provides books, photocopied materials, cassettes and an extensive collection of videos for loan to students. A video-viewing suite is available within the Faculty. The Library is well stocked for students of English with printed materials as well as essential electronic databases on-line and on CD ROM, such as the OED, the MLA Bibliography, and JSTOR. Specialist subject librarians are available to give students advice and guidance to library resources.

### **Career prospects**

In recent years students who have gained an English degree from Reading have gone into a wide variety of jobs, including teaching, publishing, journalism, the media, management, administration, and public relations. An English degree provides graduates with a range of communication and analytical skills that will serve them in good stead in the marketplace. A number of graduates each year go on to further academic study and research. In addition to the help provided by the University Careers Advisory Service, the department has a Careers Tutor available to advise students in English on researching and planning their career choices.

### **Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**

Students may, with permission, opt to spend the Autumn term during Part 2 abroad at one of the European universities with which Reading has a Socrates exchange agreement. They would actively participate in courses abroad, experience the teaching and learning processes of another institution, learn or improve their knowledge of a European language, and enhance their curriculum vitae. Students opting for the term abroad will take the equivalent of 60 English credits at Intermediate level while abroad. These will count towards final degree classification.

### **Programme Outcomes**

#### **Knowledge and Understanding**

##### **A. Knowledge and understanding of:**

1. Literary texts in English from selected periods between the Middle Ages and the present day
2. A range of kinds of texts including fiction, poetry and drama
3. Methods of critical textual analysis
4. Ways in which social, cultural and historical issues relate to texts
5. A range of approaches in English studies
6. Selected special fields of English

##### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Knowledge and understanding are gained through formal teaching (lectures, seminar discussions, and individual essay feedback), prescribed and recommended reading, and the writing of essays and a dissertation. Certificate Level modules offer a broad introduction to 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. At Intermediate Level the understanding and skills acquired at Certificate Level are developed with particular emphasis on 1, 2 and 4 through seminars, lectures and individual feedback. Honours Level modules introduce more specialized study, particularly in relation to 3, 5 and 6, through a choice of seminar-based modules together with

supervised, independent study leading to a dissertation.

#### *Assessment*

At Certificate and Intermediate Levels, knowledge and understanding of 1 - 5 are tested through a combination of essays and unseen written examinations. At Honours Level, assessment is through a mixture of methods, such as extended essays, essays plus unseen exams, and the dissertation

### **Skills and other attributes**

#### **B. Intellectual skills - able to:**

1. Capacity for independent analysis and research
2. Identification of problems and issues
3. The ability to read closely and critically
4. An ability to reflect on one's own positions

#### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Intellectual skills are acquired through independent reading (1), seminar preparation and discussion, and essay writing (1, 2, 3) and essay feedback through tutorials (2, 3 and 4).

#### *Assessment*

1 - 3 are assessed both formatively in coursework essays, and summatively in essays, unseen exams and the dissertation.

1- 4 are assessed formatively through seminar discussion and essay feedback and tutorials.

#### **C. Practical skills - able to:**

1. The ability to criticize and formulate interpretations of texts
2. An ability to engage in critical argument using relevant theoretical approaches
3. An awareness of the rhetorical resources of the English language
4. Bibliographical and research skills
5. A knowledge of appropriate conventions in the presentation of written work
6. An ability to relate the study of English to cultural and social issues

#### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

1 - 3 and 6 are developed in seminars ,essays and essay tutorials. 4 and 5 are developed through essays, essay feedback and dissertation guidance and supervision.

#### *Assessment*

All the subject specific practical skills are assessed through formative and summative essays. 1 - 3 and 6 are also tested in unseen examinations.

#### **D. Transferable skills - able to:**

1. Fluency in written and oral communication
2. The ability to formulate and present arguments
3. Assessing the merits of competing approaches
4. The ability to translate subject-specific knowledge and skills into other environments
5. The ability to find and use relevant information resources
6. Time -management skills
7. A creative approach to problem-solving
8. Group and interpersonal skills
9. An ability to self-evaluate and self-reflect
10. Use of information technology, especially word-processing

#### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Transferable skills are developed through seminar discussions(1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 9), through seminar presentations, essay writing, tutorial feedback and unseen examinations (1 - 9). 4 and 7 particularly are developed through requiring students to draw on acquired knowledge and skills when analyzing new material in essays and unseen examinations. 5 and 10 are developed through use of the library and other sources of information, for seminar preparation, essay writing and research for the dissertation. We require that all summatively assessed essays are word-processed (10).

#### *Assessment*

1 - 7 and 9 are formatively assessed through

coursework essays and seminar presentations, and summatively assessed through essays, unseen examinations, and the dissertation. 9 is encouraged through essay feedback and essay tutorials. 8 is encouraged through seminars and in tutorials.

**Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.**