MSt in Writing for Performance FAQs

Who can apply?
The most important qualification is writing talent, and the writing sample is the first things we look at in the application. A first degree in a relevant subject is helpful, but we have non-standard applicants too, and these are considered equally. Evidence that applicants are currently working with commitment to their writing may be important.

What are my chances of success?
We only take 18 students per cohort, so entry is likely to be highly competitive. Nevertheless, if you feel you have a genuine talent for writing and a strong commitment to the work involved, you should certainly consider applying.

Who would be teaching me?
All tutors are professional writers or other professionals from the world of broadcasting and publishing.

Can you describe a typical student?
There is no typical student: cohorts from other creative writing courses have included students aged 22 to 69 from all walks of life and from Australia, New Zealand, the US, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Lebanon, the West Indies as well as the UK and Ireland.

What is a master of studies?
An MSt (peculiar to Oxford and Cambridge) is the same level as an MA (Master of Arts) in other universities.

What does the first year of the MSt involve?
The first year involves four residential sessions at Madingley Hall; each of these lasts four days. An assignment will be completed after each module in the first year – totaling 20 pages of script/screenplay/performance text, two critical essays of 3,000 words each; and a piece of reflective writing of 2,000 words.

What does the second year involve?
The final assignment (Dissertation) which forms the student’s work in the second year consists of an extract from a larger creative project (a 90-minute stage or screenplay, or two 45-minute TV episodes, or 90-minutes of performance text/stand-up text) with a synopsis of the broader work and a covering letter to a literary agent and, a written reflective and critical commentary, totaling 5,000 words. Students receive five supervisions in the second year (each lasting about an hour) - these consist of one-to-one sessions with their supervisor, face-to-face or by Skype if the student lives some distance from Cambridge.

If the MSt is not for me are there other creative writing courses the University offers at ICE?
We offer an Undergraduate Certificate in Creative Writing, Undergraduate Diploma in Creative Writing, a Summer School in Creative Writing and a range of short term and online courses in the subject. Click on the links below for further information:

Undergraduate Certificate in Creative Writing: Fiction and Writing for Performance
Undergraduate Certificate in Creative Writing: Creative Non-Fiction
Undergraduate Diploma in Creative Writing: Advanced Non-Fiction
Undergraduate Diploma in Creative Writing: Advanced Fiction and Writing for Performance
Creative Writing Summer Programme
Short courses
Online courses