

**Undergraduate Diploma in Creative
Writing: Advanced Fiction and Writing for
Performance**

2022 – 2023

Course code: 2223DCR100

COURSE GUIDE

Welcome to the **Undergraduate Diploma in Creative Writing: Advanced Fiction and Writing for Performance**, a University of Cambridge award offered by the Institute of Continuing Education (ICE). The Diploma is taught and awarded at FHEQ level 5 (i.e. second-year undergraduate level) and attracts 60 credits. The award is completed in one academic year. For further information about academic credit please see our website: <http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/studying-with-us/information-for-students/qualifications-that-we-offer>.

The course offers three termly units and a syllabus and reading and resource list for each of these units are included in this course guide.

The programme aims to:

1. introduce students to a wide range of different literary genres and styles in order to stimulate and develop their own creative writing;
2. develop students' critical skills in assessing the work of published authors and their own writing;
3. provide opportunities for students to experiment with their own work and to build their confidence;
4. extend students' knowledge of the transferability of techniques between different genres;
5. encourage students to contextualise their writing within a variety of traditions and genres;
6. provide opportunities for progression to further study in the area of creative writing.

Transferable skills for further study and employability

- The capacity for independent thought and judgement
- The development of independent learning, study and time management skills
- The deployment of skills in critical reasoning
- The development of competence in using IT to support one's work
- The ability to work with others, productively and equitably
- The qualities necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility and the demonstration of high levels of motivation and personal commitment through part-time study

Study hours

The award of academic credit is a means of quantifying and recognising learning and within the UK, one credit notionally represents 10 hours of learning¹. Each of the units in this course attracts 20 credits so students should expect to need to study for approximately 200 hours in total to complete each unit successfully. However, it is recognised that students study at different paces and use a variety of approaches, so this is a recommendation, rather than a hard-and-fast calculation.

1 'Academic credit in higher education in England – an introduction'. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2009

Teaching staff

Course Director

Elizabeth Speller has a Cambridge MA and MPhil in Classics. Her work crosses genres and includes *The Return of Captain John Emmett* (Virago, 2011, Orange Book of the Month) *The Strange Case of Kitty Easton*, and *At Break of Day* (Virago, 2014, CNY State One Read 2015). Her non-fiction includes *Following Hadrian* (Hodder/OUP, 2003) companion guides to Athens and Rome and a memoir, *The Sunlight on the Garden* (Granta, 2007). She was

awarded second prize in the Bridport Prize, was short-listed for the Forward Prize for Poetry and she provided the libretto for Michael Berkeley's work *Farewell*, commissioned by Sir Paul McCartney in memory of his first wife, Linda.

She has written for a range of publications including *The Observer*, *The Times*, *Financial Times*, *Sunday Telegraph*, *Independent on Sunday*, *TLS*, *Independent*, *Big Issue*, *Royal Academy Magazine*, *BA Magazine* and *Vogue*. Her most recent work is a short story of the supernatural in the anthology *Kiss and Part* (Canterbury Press 2019). She is currently writing a novel set in West Berlin in the 1960's.

Tutors

The course will be taught by a team of experienced tutors with teaching and research interests in diverse areas of critical and creative work. The most up-to-date lecture list for each unit including any guest lecturers will be published in the course's Virtual Learning Environment. Tutors on this course will likely include:

Craig Baxter is a dramatist writing primarily for the stage but also for screen and radio. Most recently: "Dreamcatcher" (Zoom play for SEND children and families, winner One Off Special Award at the Offies 2021); "Seneca Annoyed" and "Darwin Vexed" (podcast dramas for "The Sound of Anger", winner of 2 Gold Great British Podcast awards 2020) "Trumpington Voices" (community verbatim play), "The Little Big Band" (musical book, Netherhall School), "Eight Days That Made Rome" (TV drama documentary, Channel 5), "Lady Anna: All at Sea" (Cambridge Arts Theatre, Bath Theatre Royal and Number One Tour), "Pictures of You" (Cambridge Science Festival), "Somniology" (Hotbed Festival, Soho Theatre), "Let Newton Be!" (Faraday Institute, Cambridge, El Paso), "Re:Design" (Darwin Correspondence Project, Madrid, Berlin, Istanbul), "Like Confessing a Murder" (BBC Radio 3), "Monogamy" (Riverside Studies, BBC Radio 4), "The Altruists", winner of the fourth international Stage Script Competition for Best New Play About Science or Technology.

Rick Harvey is an award-winning screenwriter, story design consultant, lecturer and mentor. Since attaining an MA Screenwriting & Research qualification from the London College of Communication in 2001, he has storylined for 'Family Affairs' (Talkback Thames/Channel 5), developed projects for Hewland International and Frenzy Films, written a slate of short films (including the multi-award winning 'Alder') and spec features, mentored on First Light, Media Box and BFI projects and written and developed feature screenplays for EON Productions. He was trained by the UK Film Council to devise, develop and deliver industry-standard courses on screenwriting and cross-platform story design, and he lectures regularly on various aspects of the (screen)writing process. Rick is currently writing / developing an Eco-Horror feature, based on 'Alder', a traditional ghost story, 'Siren', and overseeing the MA in Filmmaking at Raindance. He is also a panel tutor at the Institute of Continuing Education at Cambridge University, and an Associate Lecturer at LCC and at ARU.

Claire McGlasson is an author and journalist whose debut novel *The Rapture* (Faber and Faber), inspired by the true story of an Edwardian cult of women, was a Sunday Times Book of the Year. She reports for *ITV News*, appears on programmes such as *BBC 4's Front Row*, is a regular chair and guest at literary festivals and writes articles for publications including *The Guardian* and *The Big Issue*. She is currently writing her second novel for Faber.

Menna van Praag was born in Cambridge and studied Modern History at Balliol College, Oxford. She's the author of five magical realism novels: *The House at the End of Hope Street* (2013), *The Dress Shop of Dreams* (2015), *The Witches of Cambridge* (2016), *The Lost Art of Letter Writing* (2017), *The Patron Saint of Lost Souls* (2019) all set in Cambridge. Her first novella *Men, Money & Chocolate* was translated into 26 languages. The first two instalments of her fantasy trilogy, *The Sisters Grimm*, were published in 2020 and 2022 by

Transworld. She's a Creative Writing tutor who teaches for institutions including ICE, Hay House Publishers, Anglia Ruskin University and The Cambridge School of Drama & the Creative Arts. She's also worked as a script reader and editor for BBC Wales, BBC Films and Box TV and for The Wylie Literary Agency.

Administrative staff

Head of Academic Centre Administration: Sarah Blakeney, Institute of Continuing Education, University of Cambridge, Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge, CB23 8AQ, 01223 760865

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Institute of Continuing Education

The Institute of Continuing Education's administrative headquarters are at Madingley Hall, an elegant country house built in the 16th century and set in gardens of about seven acres, designed in the 18th century by Capability Brown. Please visit www.ice.cam.ac.uk and www.madingleyhall.co.uk for further information.

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Please also refer to the 'information for students' section on our website <http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/studying-with-us/information-for-students> and the 22/23 Student Handbook for further information and guidance relating to all aspects of the course including study skills, assignments, assessment and moderation. The Course Information and Help and Guidance section of the ICE VLE will also contain valuable information specific to your course.

Information correct as at 22 June 2022

Syllabus for first unit
Michaelmas term 2022

Introduction to Fiction

Start date	8 October 2022	End date	10 December 2022
Day	Saturdays	Time	11am to 4pm (with break 1-2pm)
Venue	Remote delivery		
Tutors	Elizabeth Speller Claire McGlasson	No of meetings	7 Saturday day-schools

Aims

- To expand students' knowledge of different approaches to writing prose fiction in order to inform their own choices and augment their technical skills.
- To explore what a writer can learn from the works of very different authors and from several periods by analysing a range of novels, or extracts from fiction.
- To encourage confidence in experimentation and the development of strategies to meet potential technical challenges in creative work.

Content

This course assumes some experience of writing and basic writing skills and a reasonable breadth of reading. The course will focus on novels and short stories to help students develop a lively and original style. Fiction writing is a craft which brings together the psychology and creative experience of each individual with a range of techniques and approaches that can be taught, and also amplified by critical reading. The course will include mini lectures, writing tasks, discussions about homework and workshops, where students' work can be explored in smaller groups.

Classes will build on the foundation of students' existing writing skills to explore more complex techniques for identifying a potential story: choosing its form, and establishing its unique voice, creating a coherent sense of time and place, keeping dramatic control, and creating pace, conflict, mood. This includes drawing on a wider creative imagination, including music, sound and art.

Presentation of the unit

This unit will be taught through a series of informal seminars. You will use close reading, discussion and practical writing exercises to explore different approaches to fiction. Each class is designed to expose you to new ideas or techniques and to encourage you to experiment in a relaxed, supportive and friendly atmosphere. There will also be the chance to share work on the class's password-protected Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

All teaching will be carried out remotely. We will "meet" via live video conferencing and guest speakers will also join us by video, usually from their home or office. There may be

additional, pre-recorded presentations for you to watch between classes. All our tutors have experience of teaching remotely.

Provisional lecture list

Date	Session	Indicative content
Day-school 1	8 October 2022	<p>Please read the two extracts on the VLE</p> <p>Once upon a time...</p> <p>AM: Introduction and meeting each other. What to expect and how the journey starts.</p> <p>PM: Beginnings, endings, plots, planning, and being endlessly becalmed.</p>
Day-school 2	15 October 2022	<p>Please read: Elif Shafak, <i>10 minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World</i> and, if time, Elizabeth Taylor, <i>Mrs Palfrey at the Claremont</i></p> <p>AM: Finding your voice</p> <p>PM: Point of View</p>
Day-school 3	29 October 2022	<p>Please read: Alessandro Barrico, <i>Silk</i></p> <p>AM: Drawing the lines</p> <p>Landscapes of the imagination and a sense of place.</p> <p>PM: What form suits your story best?</p> <p>Long fiction, short fiction, flash fiction, micro fiction, poetry, fragmented novels.</p>
Day-school 4	5 November 2022	<p>Please read: A.K. Blakemore, <i>The Manningtree Witches</i></p> <p>AM: Why do authors look back to history and look forward, to SF, dystopias, utopias, and fantasy?</p> <p>PM: Workshop</p>
Day-school 5	19 November 2022	<p>Please read Ingrid Persaud, <i>Love after Love</i></p> <p>AM: Words to say it</p>

		<p>Dialogue, dialect and who has the right to speak.</p> <p>PM: Write about what (or who) you know?</p> <p>Auto-fiction</p> <p>Fictionalised reality</p>
Day-school 6	26 November 2022	<p>Please read George Saunders, <i>Lincoln in the Bardo</i> and, if time, Shirley Jackson, <i>The Haunting of Hill House</i></p> <p>AM: What are Ghosts for?</p> <p>Psychology, liminality, and a democracy of storytelling.</p> <p>PM: Workshop</p>

Day-school 7	10 December 2022	Seeing things AM: Imagery, colour, lay-out, typography. What can film teach us? What can fiction teach us about film? Ekphrasis PM: Graphic novels

Learning Outcomes

As a result of the unit, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- (i) show an awareness of how to structure and develop an extended piece of prose;
- (ii) develop skills to create a sense of place and/or time;
- (iii) assess the merits of different ideas and treatments for a fictional narrative;
- (iv) demonstrate an understanding of the link between different creative forms and ideas and how aspects of them may be used within their work.

Student Assessment

As this is a Diploma course, equivalent at least to second-year undergraduate standard, students are required to carry out tasks between day-schools to make the most of the course. These tasks include reading books relevant to ideas to be explored in the following day-school and completing written exercises or small pieces of research. The best writers of fiction read widely and critically and although it may not be possible to obtain or read all the books suggested before each class, it is essential to read at least one.

All students are encouraged to maintain a private journal or commentary on their own writing and thoughts throughout the course. Although this will not be marked it will provide a useful resource when the student plans their critical commentary (see below).

Most seminars will encourage discussion and students should expect to contribute to these and it is hoped they will be willing to show or read out examples of their own writing. The end-of-term assignment will be made up of two elements:

1. A creative piece of writing of between 2,500 and 3,000 words, **the title of which must be agreed with the tutor to ensure it meets the learning outcomes of the unit.** The assignment may be a chapter or section of a work of fiction, or a short story or other single piece of fiction writing. It must be an original piece of work and, ideally, developed in response to issues explored in the course.

Assignment length: 2,500- 3,000 words. Weighting: 80% of unit grade.

2. A critical commentary on the creative work submitted by the student for this module. This will give the student the opportunity to reflect on the choices made when writing their creative piece and help them to understand the process of writing. By writing the commentary the student will have a clearer idea of the extent to which they achieved what they set out to achieve and how they have been influenced by other writers. Advice about how to write a successful critical commentary will be offered during the course.

Assignment length: 1,500 words. Weighting: 20% of unit grade.

Closing date for the submission of assignments: **Wednesday 4 January 2023 by 12.00 noon GMT***

*Greenwich Mean Time

Reading and resource list

Where possible please read the titles in bold.

The other books on the list may be referred to in class but are optional reading. All of the books should be available in paperback by the start of the course. If you are unable to obtain the titles in bold, extracts will be provided online.

Editor	Title	Publisher and date
Barrico, Alessandro	<i>Silk</i>	London: Canongate, 2006
Bennett, Alan	<i>The Uncommon Reader</i>	London: Contraband, 2015
Burnett Macrea, George	<i>His Bloody Project</i>	Contraband, 2015
Crossan, Sarah	<i>Here is the Beehive</i>	Bloomsbury, 2020
Defoe, Daniel	<i>A Journal of the Plague Year</i>	London: Penguin, 2006 (first published 1722)
Jackson, Shirley	<i>The Haunting of Hill House</i>	Penguin Classics, 2009
Kneale, Matthew	<i>English Passengers</i>	London: Penguin, 2001
Owens, Delia	<i>Where the Crawdads Sing</i>	London: Corsair, 2019
Offill, Jenny	<i>Weather</i>	Granta, 2020
Penney, Stef	<i>The Kindness of Wolves</i>	Quercus, 2007
Persuad, Ingrid	<i>Love after over</i>	Faber and Faber, 2020
Shafak, Elif	<i>10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World</i>	London: Penguin, 2019
Saunders, George	<i>Lincoln in the Bardo</i>	Bloomsbury, 2018

Shelley, Mary	<i>Frankenstein or, the Modern Prometheus</i>	London: Riverhead Books, 2017
Strout, Elizabeth	<i>Olive Kitteridge</i>	London: Simon and Schuster, 2011
Swift, Graham	<i>Waterland</i>	London: Picador, 2010
Taylor, Elizabeth	<i>Mrs Palfrey at the Claremont</i>	Chatto & Windus, 1971
Wharton, Edith	<i>The Age of Innocence</i>	Any edition. Originally published 1920
Woolf, Virginia	<i>To the Lighthouse</i>	Collins Classics 2013 and other editions (First published 1927)

Short stories:

Editor	Title	Publisher and date
Lahiri, Jhumpa	<i>Interpreter of Maladies</i>	Flamingo, 2000
Cox, Tom	<i>Help the Witch</i>	Unbound, 2018
McGregor, Jon	<i>This Isn't the Sort of Thing That Happens to Someone Like You*</i>	Granta, 2013 (and https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/this-isnt-the-sort-of-thing-that-happens-to-someone-likeyou-by-jon-mcgregor-6295205.html)

Non-fiction and books on writing.

Not essential but all interesting on the nuts and bolts of writing

Editor	Title	Publisher and date
Forsyth, Mark	<i>The Elements of Eloquence</i>	Icon, 2019
King, Stephen	<i>On Writing. A Memoir of the Craft</i>	Hodder, 2012
Parnell, Edward	<i>Ghostland: In Search of a Haunted Country</i>	Collins, 2020
Saunders, George	<i>A Swim in a Pond in the Rain</i>	Bloomsbury, 2021 (compelling insights)

		into both creative writing and Russian short stories)
Terry, Philip	<i>The Penguin Book of Oulipo</i>	Penguin Classics, 2019
Warner, Marina	<i>Once Upon A Time. A Short History of Fairy Tale</i>	OUP, 2014
Yorke, John	<i>Into the Wood: How Stories Work and Why We Write Them</i>	Penguin, 2013

Syllabus for second unit
Lent term 2023

The History of the Novel: with special focus on Fantasy, Tragedy, Comedy & Historical Fiction

Start date	7 January 2023	End date	4 March 2023
Day	Saturdays	Time	11am to 4pm (with a break 1pm-2pm)
Venue	Remote delivery		
Tutor	Menna van Praag	No of meetings	7 Saturdays day-schools

Aims

- Introduce students to a breadth of fiction and to the universal writing skills underpinning both, encouraging them to use these skills in furthering their own writing.
- Analyse works from a broad spectrum of genres, from fantasy, fairy tales and magical realism to tragedies, comedies and historical fiction.
- Examine the potential for both genres to explore social, political, and psychological issues, and to encourage students to make their own experiments with the form.

Content

In this term we will address novels from a wide-ranging breadth of genres, including fantasy, comedy, tragedy and historical fiction. In the day schools, in addition to the lectures, the students will be involved in writing exercises, discussions on the required reading, breakout rooms where students' work will be explored in smaller groups and workshopping in larger groups and with the tutor.

In the first two day schools we will explore the many elements of fantastical fiction, including the uniqueness of the fairy tale form and the many sub-genres of speculative fiction: high and low, urban, magical realism, portal, supernatural. We will explore how fantasy elements can be effectively utilised in all other genres to create original and high-concept fiction. In the third day school we will address worldbuilding with reference to a wide variety of genres. In the fourth day school we will examine the tragic hero and the fatal flaw in relation to shaping character and plot. In the fifth day school we will get some light relief in examining the comic and bittersweet. In the sixth day we will look at the modern historical novel and explore the most effective ways to bring the past to life. In the final day school will consider the many different ways of concluding your story – no matter the genre – so that it is ultimately satisfying, both for author and reader.

Presentation of the unit

This unit will be taught through a series of informal seminars. You will use close reading, discussion and practical writing exercises to explore different approaches to crime and

fantasy. Each class is designed to expose you to new ideas or techniques and to encourage you to experiment in a relaxed, supportive and friendly atmosphere. There will also be the chance to share work on the class's password-protected Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

All teaching will be carried out remotely. We will "meet" via live video conferencing and sessions will be recorded and stored on the VLE so that you can watch them if you miss a class or want to refresh your memory. All our tutors have experience of teaching remotely.

Provisional lecture list

Date	Session	Indicative content
Day-school 1	7 January 2023	The fantastical: fairy tales, folk tales and fables
Day-school 2	14 January 2023	The magical & the mundane
Day-school 3	21 January 2023	Worldbuilding: description & character
Day-school 4	4 February 2023	The tragic hero & the fatal flaw
Day-school 5	18 February 2023	The comic hero & the bittersweet
Day-school 6	25 February 2023	The modern historical novel: bringing the past to life
Day-school 7	4 March 2023	The Satisfying Ending

Learning Outcomes

As a result of the unit, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- i) Show an understanding of the strategies within a range of genres;
- ii) Demonstrate that they can employ these strategies effectively in their own writing and
- iii) Analyse how the essential storytelling dynamics are present at some level in all fiction.

Student assessment

As this is a Diploma course, equivalent at least to second-year undergraduate standard, students are required to carry out tasks between day-schools to make the most of the course. These tasks include reading books relevant to ideas to be explored in the following day-school and completing written exercises or small pieces of research.

All students are encouraged to maintain a private journal or commentary on their own writing and thoughts throughout the course. Although this will not be marked it should provide a useful resource when the student plans their critical commentary (see below). Most seminars will encourage discussion and students should expect to contribute to these and it is hoped they will be willing to show or read out examples of their own writing in a workshop situation.

The end-of-term assignment will be made up of two elements:

1. A creative piece of writing of between 2,500 and 3,000 words, the title of which **must be agreed in advance with the tutor to ensure it meets the learning outcomes of the unit**. The assignment may be **any genre**, a chapter from **a novel** or a short story. It must be an original piece of work and, ideally, developed in response to subjects explored in the course.

Assignment length: 2,500- 3,000 words. Weighting: 80% of unit grade.

2. A critical commentary on the creative work submitted by the student for this module. This will give the student the opportunity to reflect on the choices made when writing their creative piece and help them to understand the process of writing. By writing the commentary the student will have a clearer idea of the extent to which they achieved what they set out to achieve and how they have been influenced by other writers. Advice about how to write a successful critical commentary will be offered during the course.

Assignment length: 1,500 words. Weighting: 20% of unit grade.

Closing date for the submission of assignments: **Wednesday 22 March 2023 by 12.00 noon GMT***

*Greenwich Mean Time

Please note that not every learning outcome will apply to **both** the creative assignment and the critical commentary.

Reading and resource list

Editor	Title	Publisher and date
Allende, Isabel	<i>The House of the Spirits (La Casa de los Espíritus)</i>	London: Jonathan Cape (translation), 1985
Amado, Jorge	<i>Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands (Dona Flor e Seus Dois Maridos)</i>	London: Vintage (translation), 2006
Babalola, Bolu	<i>Love in Colour</i>	London: Headline, 2021
Bennett, Alan	<i>The Uncommon Reader*</i>	London: Faber & Faber, 2007
Carter, Angela	<i>The Bloody Chamber*</i>	London: Victor Gollancz, 1979
Chevalier, Tracy	<i>Girl With a Pearl Earring*</i>	London: HarperCollins, 1999
Ephron, Nora	<i>Heartburn*</i>	London: Virago Press, 1996

Esquivel, Laura	<i>Like Water for Chocolate</i>	London: Black Swan (translation), 1993
Gaiman, Neil	<i>Stardust*</i>	London: Headline, 1999
Gaiman, Neil	<i>The Graveyard Book</i>	London: Bloomsbury, 2009
Gilbert, Zoe	<i>Folk*</i>	London: Bloomsbury, 2018
Glasfurd, Guinevere	<i>The Words in My Hands</i>	London: Two Roads, 2016
Glasfurd, Guinevere	<i>Privilege</i>	London: Two Roads, 2022
Ishiguro, Kazuo	<i>The Remains of the Day*</i>	London: Faber & Faber, 1989
Mantel, Hilary	<i>Wolf Hall</i>	London: Fourth Estate, 2009
Miller, Madeline	<i>Circe</i>	London: Bloomsbury, 2018
Morgenstern, Erin	<i>The Night Circus*</i>	London: Harvill Secker, 2011
Morton, Kate	<i>The House at Riverton</i>	Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2006
Niffenegger, Audrey	<i>The Time Traveler's Wife</i>	New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2003
Nzelu, Okechukwu	<i>The Private Joys of Nnenna Maloney</i>	London: Dialogue Books, 2020
Oyeyemi, Helen	<i>Gingerbread</i>	London, Picador, 2018
Oyeyemi, Helen	<i>Mr Fox</i>	London: Picador, 2012
Shelley, Mary	<i>Frankenstein*</i>	London: Canterbury Classics (reprint), 2013
Spufford, Francis	<i>Golden Hill</i>	London: Faber & Faber, 2016

Tolkien, JRR	<i>The Hobbit</i> *	London: Harper Collins (reprint), 2013
van Praag, Menna	<i>The Sisters Grimm</i> *	London: Transworld, 2020
van Praag, Menna	<i>Night of Demons & Saints</i> *	London: Transworld, 2022
Walker, Alice	<i>The Color Purple</i>	London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson (reprint), 2017
Waters, Sarah	<i>Fingersmith</i>	London: Virago, 2002
Wharton, Edith	<i>The Age of Innocence</i> *	London: Canterbury Classics (reprint), 2014
Wodehouse, P.G.	<i>The Inimitable Jeeves</i> *	London: Arrow Books (reprint), 2008

* indicates required reading. Students will be advised which texts to read for specific classes.

Syllabus for third unit Easter term 2023

Writing for Performance

Start date	1 April 2023	End date	20 May 2023
Day	Saturdays	Time	11am to 4pm (with a break 1pm-2pm)
Venue	Remote delivery		
Tutor	Craig Baxter Rick Harvey	No of meetings	6 Saturday day-schools

Aims

This unit aims to:

- introduce students to the techniques required to write for screen, radio, theatre and other platforms;
- encourage students to apply, and to experiment with, these techniques and strategies to further their own writing;
- explore strategies for students to develop their own short-form dramatic scripts;
- enable students to appraise and assess aesthetic and practical issues of adapting work for a performance-based medium.

Content

The term “performance-based medium” encompasses a broad range of writing from traditional formats, such as film, TV, radio and the stage, to more recent platforms such as interactive stories, video games and web series. This unit will introduce students to the different conventions involved in writing for each. Students will discuss the pros and cons of each medium and how the same story may be interpreted in different ways. Examples taken from stage, screen, radio and new media works will be used to highlight and examine the techniques used by writers, and students will be encouraged to experiment with these in their own work. We will discuss the importance of theme, character, form and dialogue, to explore imaginative ways of transferring from a textual to a performance medium. This may involve changing aspects of the original text, such as point of view, thematic focus, number and nature of characters, location, period, etc. Students will be given the opportunity to develop an original short-form work or adapt an existing work from a textual medium (i.e. short story, poem, or monologue) to a performance-based one.

Presentation of the unit

This unit will be taught through a series of informal seminars. You will use close reading, discussion and practical writing exercises to explore different approaches to writing for performance. Each class is designed to expose you to new ideas or techniques and to encourage you to experiment in a relaxed, supportive and friendly atmosphere. There will also be the chance to share work on the class’s password-protected Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

All teaching will be carried out remotely. We will “meet” via live video conferencing and guest speakers will also join us by video, usually from their home or office. There may be additional, pre-recorded presentations for you to watch between classes. All our tutors have experience of teaching remotely.

Provisional lecture list

Date	Session	Indicative content
Day-school 1	1 April 2023	Introduction to writing for performance
Day-school 2	15 April 2023	Writing for the Screen: Short Films – Character, Theme, Concept and Story
Day-school 3	22 April 2023	Writing for Theatre – Monologue and Dialogue
Day-school 4	29 April 2023	Designing an Original TV Series: From Pitch to Pilot
Day-school 5	13 May 2023	Writing for Radio – Silence and Intimacy
Day-school 6	20 May 2023	Adaptation

Learning Outcomes

As a result of the unit, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- (i) demonstrate an understanding of the demands of writing for the stage, screen or radio;
- (ii) show understanding of the techniques and strategies for creating original work or adapting work for a performance-based medium;
- (iii) experiment with and apply techniques and strategies for writing for performance to further their own writing;
- (iv) Show awareness of aesthetic and practical issues in choosing material for a performance-based medium.

Student assessment

As this is a Diploma course, equivalent at least to second-year undergraduate standard, students are required to carry out tasks between day-schools to make the most of the course. These tasks include reading books or scripts relevant to ideas to be explored in the following day-school and completing written exercises or small pieces of research. All students are encouraged to maintain a private journal or commentary on their own writing and thoughts throughout the course. Although this will not be marked it should provide a useful resource when the student plans their critical commentary (see below). Most seminars will encourage discussion and students should expect to contribute to these and it is hoped they will be willing to show or read out examples of their own writing in a workshop. The end-of-term assignment will be made up of two elements:

1. An adaptation, or an original work, of between 2,500 and 3,000 words (or the equivalent, appropriate to the form), written by the student, the title of which **must be agreed in advance with the tutor to ensure it meets the learning outcomes of the unit.** . The assignment may take the form of a short radio play, stage play, screenplay, interactive

story etc., or constitute the opening / first act, or section, of a longer work.

Assignment length: 2,500-3,000 words (or the equivalent, appropriate to the form).
Weighting: 80% of unit grade.

2. A critical commentary on the creative work submitted by the student for this module. This will give the student the opportunity to reflect on the choices made when writing their creative piece and help them to understand the process of writing. By writing the commentary the student will have a clearer idea of the extent to which they achieved what they set out to achieve and how they have been influenced by other practitioners. Advice about how to write a successful critical commentary will be offered during the course.

Assignment length: 1,500 words. Weighting: 20% of unit grade.

Please note that not every learning outcome will apply to both the creative assignment and the critical commentary.

Closing date for the submission of assignments: **Friday 9 June 2023 by 12.00 noon BST***

*British Summer Time

Reading and resource list

Editor	Title	Publisher and date
Egri, Lajos	<i>The Art of Dramatic Writing</i>	London: Simon & Schuster, 1960
Grace, Fraser & Bayley, Clare	<i>Playwriting (Writers' and Artists' Companions)</i>	London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015
Grace, Yvonne	<i>Writing for Television Series, Serials and Soaps</i>	Creative Essentials, 2014
Grove, Claire & Wyatt, Stephen	<i>So you want to write Radio Drama?</i>	London: Nick Hern Books, 2013
Jeffreys, Stephen	<i>Playwriting</i>	London: Nick Hern Books, 2019
Johnson, Claudia H	<i>Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect</i>	Routledge, 2020
Lennard, John & Luckhurst, Mary	<i>The Drama Handbook: a guide to reading plays</i>	Oxford University Press, 2002
Parker, Philip	<i>The Art & Science of Screenwriting</i>	Intellect, 1998
Pratten, Robert	<i>Getting Started in Transmedia Storytelling: A Practical Guide for Beginners</i>	London: CreateSpace, 2015

Seeger, Linda	<i>The Art of Adaptation: Turning Fact and Fiction Into Films</i>	New York: Henry Holt & Co, 1992
Seeger, Linda	<i>Creating Unforgettable Characters</i>	Holt (Henry) & Co, 1998
Teddern, Sue & Warburton, Nick	<i>Writing for TV and Radio (Writers' and Artists' Companions)</i>	London: Bloomsbury, Academic, 2015
Waters, Steve	<i>The Secret Life of Plays</i>	London: Nick Hern Books, 2010
Yorke, John	<i>Into the Wood</i>	London: Penguin, 2013

* indicates required reading. Students will be told which of these texts should be read for specific classes.

TIMETABLE

Michaelmas 2022: Introduction to fiction

Day-school 1	8 October 2022
Day-school 2	15 October 2022
Day-school 3	29 October 2022
Day-school 4	5 November 2022
Day-school 5	19 November 2022
Day-school 6	26 November 2022
Day-school 7	10 December 2022

Lent 2023: Crime and Fantasy Writing

Day-school 1	7 January 2023
Day-school 2	14 January 2023
Day-school 3	21 January 2023
Day-school 4	4 February 2023
Day-school 5	18 February 2023
Day-school 6	25 February 2023
Day-school 7	4 March 2023

Easter 2023: Writing for Performance

Day-school 1	1 April 2023
Day-school 2	15 April 2023
Day-school 3	22 April 2023
Day-school 4	29 April 2023
Day-school 5	13 May 2023
Day-school 6	20 May 2023

Whilst every effort is made to avoid changes to this programme, published details may be altered without notice at any time. The Institute reserves the right to withdraw or amend any part of this programme without prior notice.

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