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A great night out

Martin Newell
21 Sep 2008

"I did my undergraduate and postgraduate studies at Westminster, partly because, living in London, it was so convenient for me. But I also came along to an open day, and met the teaching staff, and then it was obvious that this was exactly where I wanted to be. Now I've applied to do my PhD at Westminster as well.

"Actually the University was even better than I expected it to be. I had been to some other open days and looked at other places to study, and they all seemed quite generic to me, but the course at Westminster looked more interesting and more challenging – it really pushes you. But I think it helps you to achieve even more, and it's so rewarding when you complete your course.

"I finished my Masters last year, and I've carried on working in the same part-time job, but I've also been putting together my PhD application, so there's a lot of work and research involved in that.

"My aim eventually is to become a lecturer, although obviously the priority is to get my PhD done and then see where it takes me. But my time at Westminster has made me realise that this is the sort of environment I want to work in.

"The teaching staff for my degree and my Masters were brilliant – if you are willing to work, they will do everything they can to help you, and they are also very approachable, which is why I've chosen to continue studying at Westminster."

MARIA CONSTANTINE, ENGLISH LITERATURE MA, STUDENT



LINGUISTICS AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Our research in Linguistics and English Language at Westminster has particular strengths in lexical history and categorisation, creole linguistics and contact languages, practical phonetics, and pedagogical research on language teaching. In the 1990s Westminster founded the Creole Linguistics Research Group, and since then has overseen a series of publications in the *Westminster Creolistics Series*. More recently, we launched the annual *Interface with Linguistics* series, which seeks to explore and promote the use of linguistics research outside of academia. The department also currently co-hosts the AHRC-funded five-year project, *The Lexis of Cloth and Clothing in Britain c.700-1450*. Contact Dr Louise Sylvester (l.sylvester1@westminster.ac.uk) or visit westminster.ac.uk/ssh/linguisticsresearch

VISUAL CULTURE

The School's interdisciplinary Visual Culture Research Group has particular research strengths in creative digital technologies, urban visual culture, aesthetics, contemporary Chinese art and photographic theory. A key part of our work involves the application of critical and theoretical approaches to curation, museum and gallery practices, as well as to issues of archival and cultural memory. Contact Peter Ride (ridep@westminster.ac.uk) or visit westminster.ac.uk/ssh/page-3057

SHORT COURSES/CPD

There are short courses available from the London Liberal Arts Summer School. Contact Dr Sacha Darke (+44 (0)20 7911 5000 ext 2114, S.Darke@westminster.ac.uk).

RESEARCH IN LITERARY AND CULTURAL STUDIES

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Research in English at Westminster embraces a range of different critical approaches and covers all periods from the medieval to the contemporary. Particular strengths in the department include Victorian literature and culture, Modernism and the contemporary novel, as well as interdisciplinary research on both literature and philosophy, and literature and visual culture. Recent publications by staff include books on Modernism, Gothic, Oscar Wilde, Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, medieval romance and heterosexuality, contemporary British fiction, Samuel Beckett, and literary theory. Contact Dr David Cunningham (cunninda@westminster.ac.uk) or visit westminster.ac.uk/ssh/englishresearch

INSTITUTE FOR MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY CULTURE

The Institute provides an interdisciplinary research environment for advanced study in the arts, humanities and cultural institutions in the heart of London, bringing together creative, critical, and committed researchers and postgraduate students from around the world. It draws on staff from across the University and also works with a number of international visiting research fellows as well as world-leading writers and artists. The Institute runs a bespoke PhD programme for those interested in interdisciplinary doctoral research in Modern and Contemporary Culture, and possesses research expertise in a range of fields including new media and digital technologies, post-colonial and globalisation studies, gender and sexuality, metropolitan cultures, and contemporary critical and aesthetic theory, biocultures and science-arts intersections. Contact Dr Marquard Smith (m.smith@westminster.ac.uk) or visit westminster.ac.uk/imcc

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For further information about Literary and Cultural Studies courses visit the English, Linguistics and Cultural Studies website at westminster.ac.uk/ssh/page-669

Cultural and Critical Studies MA

This unique interdisciplinary course offers you the opportunity to study contemporary critical and cultural debates across a wide range of fields. Exploring a variety of different visual, textual and spatial forms of culture, and their diverse theorisations, the course will particularly appeal to those with wide-ranging interests in the arts and humanities, as well as those interested in cutting-edge theoretical debates.

Modules are taught by expert staff from a number of different disciplines, giving you the chance to follow particular themes in the areas that most interest you. Recent work by staff in Cultural and Critical Studies includes books and articles on urban theory, sexuality and narrative, contemporary aesthetics, Victorian criminality, gender in China, visual culture, art and architecture, post-colonialism and critical theory.

Course content

The course consists of two core modules – Capitalism and Culture, and Problems and Perspectives in Cultural Studies. These establish a framework for the close analysis of the locations, products and systems of culture. The dissertation of 10-12,000 words is also a core module, and can be written on an appropriate topic of your choice.

Option modules, choose four from: Creative Digital Technology • Interpreting Spaces • Reading Contemporary Culture • Reading the Nation • Representing World Cultures • Sexuality and Narrative • The Human Image • Urban Cultures

There is also an optional work placement module.

You are further encouraged to attend the programmes of research seminars offered in the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Languages, at which visiting speakers, creative practitioners and teaching staff present their current work.

Related courses

English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fictions MA
• Visual Culture MA

Length of course

One-year, full-time or two-year, part-time (January start available)

Location

Central London (Regent)

Fee band

Fee band 1, see p34

Associated careers

The course is intended to give you sophisticated critical skills and a widely applicable knowledge of contemporary culture. This enables further study at MPhil or PhD levels, but is also particularly relevant to a range of professions in the media, creative and cultural industries.

Entry requirements

You are normally required to have a good first degree or equivalent in a relevant subject. If your first language is not English, you will need an IELTS score of 6.5 or equivalent. The University offers pre-sessional summer programmes if you need to improve your English before starting your course.

English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fictions MA

This course gives you the chance to study English literature in a modern university environment, while utilising the wealth of resources offered by London's rich cultural life. You will examine literary texts in the wider context of cultural production and relate them to the social, historical and political circumstances from which they emerge.

The course team consists of academic specialists who make use of the many nearby museums, galleries and libraries in their teaching. The course will be of particular interest to those wishing to prepare for further study at MPhil or PhD level, and those teaching English who want to gain a further qualification and investigate recent and current developments in the field.

Course content

The course is organised around the themes of reading, re-reading and interpretation. You will study a range of periods and issues in literature, to place literary texts in cultural contexts and to understand them within the critical history of literature.

The course consists of two core modules and four option modules, plus the dissertation of 12-15,000 words, which is written at the end of the course. The core modules, Reading/Re-Reading 1 and 2, comprise an examination of classic and contemporary critical texts on literature in relation to ideas in larger contexts, such as history, the visual image, gender, psychoanalysis and post-colonialism.

Core modules: Dissertation • Reading/Re-Reading 1 and 2

Option modules, choose four from: London Vortex: Twentieth-Century Literature and the City • Reading Contemporary Culture • Reading London • Reading the Nation • Re-Reading Modernism • Sexuality and Narrative • Special Author/Topic • Urban Cultures • Victorian Explorations

Related courses

Cultural and Critical Studies MA • London Studies MA
• Visual Culture MA

Length of course

One-year, full-time or two-year, part-time (January start available)

Location

Central London (Regent)

Fee band

Fee band 1, see p34

Associated careers

The course is particularly relevant to those employed in a range of professions, including English teachers wishing to update their professional skills, and professional researchers. The part-time course would appeal to those interested in studying English literature for career development and general interest.

Entry requirements

You are required to have a good Honours degree in a relevant subject, or an officially recognised equivalent. If your first language is not English you must be able to demonstrate that you have a level equivalent to at least 7.0 in each area of the IELTS exam.

Literary Linguistics MA

This course (subject to approval) introduces you to a range of analytic techniques for a variety of text types, including prose fiction, poetry and drama. You will develop a vocabulary for linguistic description and a repertoire of approaches to the analysis of literary texts. You will also consider some recent developments in the study of literary linguistics which came out of the desire for social and contextual analysis in the study of language. Here the focus is on the situation of production and the reception of texts and you will discuss approaches including critical discourse analysis, cognitive poetics and text world theory, as well as various techniques of analysis based in the study of pragmatic stylistics.

Course content

Core modules: History of English • Literary Linguistics 1 • Literary Linguistics 2

Option modules, choose three from the following: Cross-Cultural Communication • Linguistics • Phonetics and Phonology • Reading London • Reading/Re-Reading • Reading the Nation • Re-Reading Modernism • Syntax • Translation Theory • Victorian Explorations • World Englishes

Having completed the taught component, you will be given supervision to support you in your written dissertation of 10-12,000 words.

Related courses

Applied Language Studies MA • Cultural and Critical Studies MA • English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fictions MA • Linguistics MA

Length of course

One-year, full-time or two-year, part-time

Location

Central London (Regent)

Fee band

Fee band 1, see p34

Associated careers

The course provides you with highly developed skills in literary and linguistic textual analysis, and the ability to think critically about the construction of discourses in society. This enables further study at MPhil or PhD levels, but is also particularly relevant to teaching and to professions such as law, politics and the media which require advanced linguistic and analytical skills.

Entry requirements

Applicants are normally required to have a good first degree or equivalent in a relevant subject. If your first language is not English you must have an IELTS score of 7.0 or equivalent. Applicants will need to give two academic references and to attend an interview (applicants resident in the UK) or submit a 1,500-word essay (applicants resident overseas).

London Studies MA

This interdisciplinary course gives you the opportunity to study the history, communities, art, culture and architecture of London. It will be of particular interest if you are looking to enhance your knowledge of the city, and acquire skills in the advanced analysis of its culture. Modules are offered from a number of different disciplines, enabling you to follow particular themes in the areas that most interest you. The course team consists of staff specialising in literature, visual culture, history, architecture, and cultural studies.

Course content

The two taught core modules are Reading London and Urban Cultures. These provide the framework for understanding and analysing London in the context of relevant perspectives, such as urban theory, the built environment and literary and visual representation. The third core module is the dissertation of 10-12,000 words, which is normally written at the end of the course and can be on an appropriate topic of your choice.

Core modules: Reading London • Urban Cultures

Option modules, choose four from: City Histories, City Futures • Interpreting Spaces • London Vortex: Twentieth-Century Literature and the City • Representing World Cultures • The Suburban Century • Work Placement

Related courses

Cultural and Critical Studies MA • English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fictions MA • Visual Culture MA

Length of course

One-year, full-time or two-year, part-time

Location

Central London (Regent)

Fee band

Fee band 1, see p34

Associated careers

The course is intended to provide you with sophisticated critical skills and a widely applicable knowledge base. This enables further study at MPhil or PhD levels, but is also relevant to a range of professions in the creative and cultural industries, particularly heritage and museum work and cultural policy.

Entry requirements

You are normally required to have a good first degree or equivalent in a relevant subject. If your first language is not English, you will need an IELTS score of 6.5 or equivalent. The University offers pre-sessional summer programmes if you need to improve your English before starting your course.

Visual Culture: Creative Practices and Cultural Institutions MA

This is a unique, multidisciplinary, theory-based course established around the belief that visual literacy and the impact of visual forms of thinking and working now play significant roles in society. The course has a special relationship with museums and galleries in central London and has established contacts with other galleries and organisations for work placements.

The course introduces you to a range of historical and contemporary debates that inform the theories and practice of visual culture, and enables you to develop a conceptual framework within which to evaluate the role of the visual arts in contemporary society and culture. You will acquire creative and professional research skills, such as the ability to work from exhibitions and institutional archives, to be able to understand the role of curators and to operate within different artistic and conceptual frameworks.

Course content

The course balances theoretical accounts of visual culture and thinking with the application of these perspectives to visual representations in various contexts: museum display, gallery curation, the material culture of the city, the visual arts, style and fashion, museum exhibitions, the application of digital technology, and constructions of identity and body.

Core modules: Dissertation and Research Methodologies

• Theoretical and Critical Perspectives • Visual Culture: Production Display and Discourse

Option modules: Capitalism and Culture • Creative Digital Technology

• Inclusive Practice in Museums • Interpreting Space • Representing World Cultures • The Human Image • Urban Cultures

Other options are available from related courses in the Department of English, Linguistics and Cultural Studies.

Related courses

Cultural and Critical Studies MA • English Literature: Modern and Contemporary Fictions MA • London Studies MA

Length of course

One-year, full-time
or two-year, part-time
(January start available)

Location

Central London (Regent)

Fee band

Fee band 2, see p34

Associated careers

Graduates will be suitable for employment in the creative industries, including museum and gallery work, education, arts administration and marketing, or could pursue further study to PhD level. The course is also suitable for practising artists wishing to further their research.

Entry requirements

You should have a good first degree in a relevant area, such as history of art, cultural studies, fine art or design, English, history, media and communications, architecture and business studies. You may be invited for interview, or to submit previous written work. All students whose first language is not English will be asked to provide examples of previous written work and must have a minimum IELTS score of 6.5, or TOEFL 600 (in both reading and writing). The University offers pre-sessional summer programmes if you need to improve your English before starting your course.