

Lancaster
University



Creative Writing
Undergraduate Degrees
2025



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Get in touch

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Connect with us

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 [@lancasterwords](https://www.facebook.com/lancasterwords)

Welcome

Creative Writing at Lancaster has a long and distinguished history, dating back to 1970 when we were one of the very first universities to teach the subject in the UK, and we have since continued to lead developments in the field. Our Creative Writing tutors are practising authors, many of them award-winning, who will not only help you to develop your writing but will also advise you on professional development, including how to approach publishers and agents. Many of our graduates go on to publish and broadcast their work, in some cases winning national and international awards.

We cover all of the traditional genres (poetry, prose, short fiction, drama, scriptwriting), as well as newer forms such as song lyric, graphic novel, fantasy, science fiction, memoir, and game writing.

You will study Creative Writing alongside another subject (English Literature, English Language, Film, Theatre, or Fine Art) and this will feed into and enrich your writing. You will be taught through lectures, seminars and workshops, some delivered by invited professionals in broadcasting or the publishing industry.

The Department offers a rich, creative environment in which to undertake your studies by offering a wide range of extra-curricular activities for its students.

Members of staff, all of whom are published authors, ensure that our students make the most of our proximity to the historic city of Lancaster by, for example, organising drama productions at venues such as Lancaster Castle or the Dukes Theatre and partnering with Lancaster's celebrated city-based LitFest. Our students also contribute by coordinating writing groups, performing readings, and editing four journals: *Flash*, *Cake*, *Lux* and *Errant*. Finally, you can take advantage of opportunities to undertake a placement year or study abroad at one of our partner universities.

I hope that you will choose to join us.

Professor Mark Knight
Head of Department

Creative Writing at Lancaster



6th
for Creative Writing
Complete University Guide 2025

Our Creative Writing lecturers are experienced, published practitioners in their chosen specialist areas. We have a long-established tradition of student-centred, workshop-led teaching.



10th
joint 10th for Creative Writing graduate prospects
Complete University Guide 2025

Perform
Read your work at regular open mic nights.



38th
38th for English Language and Literature worldwide
QS World Rankings 2024

Publish
Publish your work in student-run journals such as *Cake, Flash, Lux* and *Errant*.















Push your creative limits

I have loved every second of Creative Writing here at Lancaster. The workshops are incredibly diverse; you are exposed to many kinds of writing, which really inspires and challenges you to push your creative limits. The Department is friendly and supportive, and the course has such an active presence on campus. In my second year, I was Secretary of Lancaster University Writers' Society and in my third year, I was an Editor for *Cake* magazine, the Department's in-house literary journal. The opportunities for writers here are endless...

Daisy Brown
BA (Hons) English Literature and Creative Writing, recent graduate

Degrees and entry requirements

English Literature and Creative Writing	 	BA (Hons)	3 years	QW38	AAB
English Literature with Creative Writing	 	BA (Hons)	3 years	Q3W8	AAB
English Language and Creative Writing	 	BA (Hons)	3 years	Q3WV	AAB
Film and Creative Writing	 	BA (Hons)	3 years	PW38	ABB
Fine Art and Creative Writing	 	BA (Hons)	3 years	WW18	ABB
Theatre and Creative Writing	 	BA (Hons)	3 years	WW48	ABB

 Study abroad available  Placement year available

Visit our website for more information on degree options, entry requirements and scholarships www.lancaster.ac.uk

Bailrigg Awards

Thanks to a generous endowment, the Department is able to offer some support (up to £150 per award) to students who are suffering financial hardship. A student can apply once or twice a year; and, if merited, can receive one award per year.

Teaching and learning



Lectures

The lectures in the first year focus on a whole range of literary devices and techniques, and how they may be used and developed in your own work. Genre specific concerns – such as tools for effective dialogue, poetic form and stagecraft – are studied alongside broader lectures on craft, such as methods for dealing with writer's block.

In the second and third years, the lectures focus more on the next stages; such as how to approach publishers, where to send your work, and how to make a living as a writer. Lectures by your Lancaster author-tutors are supplemented with presentations by speakers from the creative writing industry on the professional aspects of being a writer.

Workshops

Workshops have always been at the heart of Lancaster Creative Writing. Each workshop is led or curated by one of our author-tutors, with students reading and commenting on each other's work. You are then encouraged to revise your writing in the light of this feedback. Workshops also give you the opportunity to respond to the weekly lectures.

Contact hours

You can expect to be in workshops and lectures for around nine hours a week in your first year, depending on which modules you sign up for. In year two and final year, contact time will reduce slightly as you become more independent in your studies. In addition, you will have set reading and assigned writing and belong to a small, pre-workshop study group. All this results in a full, though flexible, study schedule.

Assessment

Creative Writing is normally assessed by the submission of a writing portfolio (developed through the workshop plus feedback from the tutor) along with a reflective essay that demonstrates an understanding of your use of technique and the literary context(s) of your work. We aim to return coursework to you, graded and with comments from your tutor, within four weeks.

Beyond the course

There is an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and field trips. Some are organised by staff, such as readings from visiting authors at The Storey in the Castle Quarter, or in association with the city's very own LitFest and Dukes Theatre; others are organised by students, such as open mic nights on campus. Why not follow us on social media to see what we are up to -

- Twitter @lancaster_words
- Instagram elcw_lancasterwords



Your global experience

Study abroad

Grow in independence and confidence while immersing yourself in a new culture and way of learning. At Lancaster, you can apply to study abroad for the whole of your third year, providing a unique experience to add to your CV. Our current partner universities are located in Australia, Canada, Switzerland and the USA. Living in another country and studying your subjects from a different perspective offers considerable benefit both in terms of your understanding of the subject and your preparation for life after university.

Vacation travel

Discover a new world in the vacation periods with our short trips to destinations around the globe. You will return with a CV that truly stands out from the crowd in the increasingly global world of work.

We typically run short trips to destinations such as China, Germany, Ghana, Malaysia and Switzerland. These include meeting local students and businesses as well as academic study and cultural discovery. You can also attend summer schools at one of our many overseas partner universities.

Find out more:

www.lancaster.ac.uk/your-global-experience

Destinations are given as a guide only as the availability of places at overseas partners may vary year to year.



Find your voice



Creative Writing is a discipline - one that requires frequent routine and independent motivation. Studying the field at Lancaster gives you the skills, tools and confidence to trust yourself and your instincts.

I've always been fascinated by horror and comedy clashing together in surprising ways and fantastical environments. During workshops, some of my fellow students and tutors shared this sensibility while others did not but it was always useful to hear from such a variety of people, all with my best interests at heart. Sometimes their suggestions helped focus my ideas, remove continuity errors or improve my grander plans, other times they simply showed how prospective readers could respond to things I took for granted. These aspects are all useful but, most importantly, they encouraged me to find my own voice and stick to it. Writing is always about self-expression and, beyond my writing, this revelation has given me an assuredness in every aspect of life.

My fellow students have been insightful, good natured people, and connecting with them outside of seminar rooms to discuss ideas and workshop independently grew naturally from the open-minded nature of the Department.

I've been on the exec for the University's Film Society and written for the newspaper, SCAN, both of which have informed my writing. The former with its cavalcade of international and cult cinema providing inspiration, and the latter giving me an opportunity to hone my craft and collaborate with an editorial body. Lancaster has a great selection of societies which complement the course. The Writers' Society is the most obvious, but there are societies dedicated to everything from stand-up comedy to journalism, and theatre to filmmaking. The University's connections to arts organisations such as Lancaster Arts and the wonderful Duke's Theatre and Cinema also provides a professional springboard if you get involved.

Joe Hopewell

BA (Hons) Film and Creative Writing, recent graduate.

Degree structure

Creative Writing at Lancaster is always taken as a joint major or a minor alongside another subject. It benefits greatly from being in combination with other subjects, and we offer many flexible pathways. In the module breakdown that follows, you will see how Creative Writing is combined with the study of English Literature.

BA (Hons) English Literature and Creative Writing (50/50% split)

On this joint major degree, you will spend as much time on Creative Writing as you do on English Literature. Creative Writing workshops, lectures, and readings will help you to develop your own writing, and this will be accompanied by a rigorous and inspiring study of literature.

BA (Hons) English Literature with Creative Writing (75/25% split)

This major-minor degree comprises three-quarters English Literature and one-quarter Creative Writing. This means that a primary focus on English Literature is accompanied by regular Creative Writing workshops with one of our author-tutors.

First year

CORE
Introduction to
Creative Writing

This year-long module is focused on the development of your own writing. You will be encouraged to experiment with various forms and genres, to explore new approaches in drafting and editing your own work, and to develop the gentle art of responding to the work of fellow students. The lectures will introduce you to a range of exciting texts and helpful terminology, and offer insight from published authors. The follow-up workshops allow you to practice technique, mature your voice, and nurture your writerly instincts.

CORE
Literature in Time

This broad introductory module will show how literature from the Middle Ages to the contemporary period has responded to moments of crisis, upheaval and radical change. Through engagement with both famous and less well known texts from the Renaissance, Victorian, Romantic, and modern periods, the module will explore many and varied possible approaches to reading literature. You will be introduced to key debates in literary study such as decolonisation, authorship, and adaptation.

The course concludes with a range of mini-modules designed with an eye on employability. You will choose one from such as: Mediaeval Manuscripts in the Digital Age; Creating a Literary Podcast; Building Minecraft Worlds for the Teaching of Literature; Creating a Literary Tour; Reading Lancaster Priory; and Re-writing *Waiting for Godot*.

OPTIONAL
World Literature

You will explore a wide range of texts from world literatures in English, including the Bible and ancients such as Ovid, Homer, and Dante. You'll look at moderns in translation, such as Kafka and Borges, and at contemporary authors such as Salman Rushdie and Mariama Bâ, as well as new media writing and the graphic novel.

OR

OPTIONAL
Literature, Place and Space

This module organises your study of literature through the frame of space, exploring a wide range of major ancient, modern, and contemporary texts, all of which relate to such particular places as archive, castle, mountain, sea, border etc.

OR

OPTIONAL
Minor module

You can select a module in another subject to complement your study of English Literature and Creative Writing.

Second and final year

Creative Writing modules – for anyone studying Creative Writing as a joint major subject

After establishing a strong foundation through taking our first-year Introduction to Creative Writing module, in your second and final years you will further develop your writing through a much wider range of modules.

You will be able to select from modules that focus on writing in the following modes and genres:

- + poetry
- + the novel
- + the stage
- + the short story
- + creative non-fiction
- + radio and podcast
- + fantasy and science fiction
- + fiction for children and young adults
- + the graphic novel
- + games (both digital and analogue)

English Literature modules – for anyone studying Creative Writing in combination with English Literature

After establishing a strong foundation in literary studies through taking our Literature in Time module, in your second and final years you will further develop your understanding through a much wider range of modules.

You will be able to select from modules in the following areas:

- + Medieval literature
- + Shakespeare
- + 16th and 17th century literature
- + Romanticism
- + The Victorians
- + Modernism(s)
- + Contemporary literature
- + American literature
- + World and Postcolonial literatures
- + Single author studies (e.g. Jane Austen)
- + The Gothic
- + Science fiction
- + Literature, bodies, and sexualities
- + Literature, film and the visual arts
- + Literature and music
- + Literature, philosophy, and politics
- + Literature and religion
- + Individual research project (a topic of your own choosing)
- + Literature in the world (libraries, museums, exhibitions, marketing, fashion, tourism etc)
- + Work placement





Creative Writing joint major degrees

In addition to English Literature, you can study Creative Writing in a joint major (50/50) degree structure with:

- English Language
- Fine Art
- Film
- Theatre

Alongside the Creative Writing modules on pages 10-11, you will study core and optional modules in your second subject in an approximately 50/50 weighting.

Please check online for more details about your specific course: www.lancaster.ac.uk



Life on your degree



Student-run journals

We currently have four in-house, student-run, creative writing journals. The print publication *Cake* publishes poetry, flash fiction, and reviews of work from established poets and newcomers alike. *Flash* is an undergraduate-run online and print journal which publishes fiction, poetry, critical and hybrid work by current Lancaster undergraduates. *Lux* is an interdisciplinary journal that seeks to showcase incisive and original work from students across the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. *Errant* is dedicated to creative-critical writing and hosts occasional special seminars.

Find out more:

www.lancaster.ac.uk/literary-lancaster



Literary Lancaster

Literature thrives at Lancaster, both on campus in the city. Here are just some of the free literary activities our students have taken part in this last year:

- + Run their own workshops in the Writer's Society, one of the student-run societies at Lancaster.
- + Set up reading and writing groups, such as the Sci-Fi and Fantasy, Literature and Religion, and Queer Reading Groups.
- + Helped to organise literary events with literary salons with nationally and internationally acclaimed authors.
- + Read a poem at our May Gathering at Lancaster's medieval Priory.
- + Developed new scripts in the Dukes Theatre in Lancaster.
- + Attended a guest reading by Nat Reeve at The Storey.
- + Discussed their poetry with Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, Paul Muldoon.
- + Participated in a graphic novel writing workshop with graphic novelist, Mary Talbot.
- + Made short promotional reels about life in the Department.
- + Attended Emily Dickinson event at The Storey.
- + Given a reading as part of our LitFest Student Showcase.
- + Attended a free staging of Paterson Joseph's one-man show *Sancho and Me* at The Dukes Theatre.
- + Participated in Folk Horror Symposium at The Dukes Theatre
- + Taken part in weekly Games Study Nights in the University Library to play-test their own new games.

The Lancaster Award

The Lancaster Award is a non-academic certificate developed in partnership with employers to help you make the most of your time at Lancaster and to demonstrate the skills you have developed along the way. It is designed to reward the wide range of volunteering activities and placements undertaken by many of our undergraduates.

Potential employers increasingly value a profile that includes more than just strong academic results, and the Lancaster Award recognises and validates these.

Find out more:

www.lancaster.ac.uk/lancaster-award

Meet our staff

Our Creative Writing tutors are experienced practitioners in their chosen specialist areas, including poetry, the novel, short fiction, script writing, creative non-fiction, and new media. They have won multiple national and international awards. Our full selection of staff profiles is available on our website. Here are introductions to three of them:

Professor
Paul Farley
*Professor of
Poetry*



Paul Farley has received widespread acclaim for his poetry, including the Whitbread Prize, the Somerset Maugham Award, the Cholmondeley Prize, the E. M. Forster Award from the American Academy of Arts & Letters, two Forward Prizes and the Sunday Times Young Writer of the Year. His *Selected Poems* was published by Picador in 2014.

As well as writing poetry, his award-winning non-fiction book *Edgelands* (2011), a series of journeys into England's overlooked wilderness, was a

BBC Radio 4 Book of the Week. Paul has also written more widely on the arts and literature for *The Guardian*, *Granta*, *Art Review* and others, and is a well-known broadcaster, having written and presented many arts features and documentary programmes for radio and television, as well as writing several original dramas and adaptations. He also presents BBC Radio 4's contemporary poetry programme, *The Echo Chamber*. Paul's latest volume of poems, *The Mizzy*, was published with Picador in 2019.

Professor
Jenn Ashworth
*Professor of
Writing, novelist
and short story
writer*



Jenn Ashworth studied at Newnham College, Cambridge and the Centre for New Writing at the University of Manchester. Before becoming a writer, she worked as a librarian in a prison. Her first novel, *A Kind of Intimacy*, was published in 2009 and won a Betty Trask Award. On the publication of her second, *Cold Light* (Sceptre, 2011) she was featured on the BBC's *The Culture Show* as one of the UK's twelve best new writers. Her third novel *The Friday Gospels* (2013) and her fourth *Fell* (2016) are also published by Sceptre. Ashworth has also published short fiction and won an award for her blog, *Every Day I Lie a Little*.

Her work has been compared to both Ruth Rendell and Patricia Highsmith; all her novels to date have been set in the Northwest of England. In 2019 she published a memoir-in-essays about reading, writing and sickness called *Notes Made While Falling* which was a New Statesman Book of the Year and shortlisted for the Gordon Burn Prize. Her latest novel is *Ghosted: A Love Story* which was shortlisted for the Portico Prize. She lives in Lancashire, is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and is a Professor of Writing, specialising in long prose fiction, the memoir and creative-critical writing.

Dr Tajinder
Singh Hayer
*Senior Lecturer
in Creative
Writing,
scriptwriter*



Taj has been writer on attachment at the Leeds Playhouse, writer in residence at BBC Radio Drama Manchester, writer on attachment at the National Theatre and was nominated as one of the Royal Court's fifty promising playwrights in 2006-7. He has written for the Leeds Playhouse, Peshkar, Freedom Studios, Menagerie, and Look Left, Look Right Theatre Company. He won the BBC's Spin new writing award in 2003, and has written for CBeebies, BBC Radio Four, BBC Radio Three, Big Finish Productions and the BBC Asian Network. He won the 2021 Papatango Prize with

Ghost Stories from an Old County. Most recently he has written the Cyclops episode of *The Odyssey* as part of the National Theatre's multi-part and multi-region adaptation of the epic poem.



Your future career

Throughout your degree, we encourage you to gain work experience that will support you in achieving your chosen career. A wide range of placement and internship opportunities are available, including credit-bearing modules that include working in creative, cultural and heritage organisations or schools. We offer the option of a placement year with the majority of our degrees, which will boost your employability.

Placement year degrees

With most of our degrees you can take a placement year, where you apply to spend Year 3 working in a professional paid role in a sector of your choice. Securing a placement is a competitive process, so we support you with personalised coaching and professional guidance throughout your second year.

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences internship scheme

As a student with us, you can apply to the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences (FASS) Internship Scheme that offers exclusive opportunities that are ring-fenced for students in the Faculty. A myriad of paid, sector-specific internships are available each year in the summer vacation and part-time during term time. Just to give you a taster, some of the past employers include St John's Hospice, Lancaster City Museums, Cumbria History Trust, the Dukes Theatre, Comma Press, Deco Publique Events, Active Lancashire, and the National Trust. Discover more: www.lancaster.ac.uk/FASS-placements



Joint 10th for Creative Writing graduate prospects
Complete University Guide 2025

Careers

A degree including Creative Writing can underpin many careers and, as well as helping our students make good academic decisions while they are with us, we also recognise the need to think ahead to life after graduation. In addition to offering placement modules, we deliver professional development sessions on employability-related matters, including bespoke talks by the University's Careers Service and we host visits from potential employers and alumni of the Department. Our graduates have gone on to be authors, poets, screen writers, journalists, new media and content writers, as well as working in the professions listed below.

Our excellent careers support is recognised in the league tables where we are joint 10th for Creative Writing Graduate Prospects (Complete University Guide, 2025). A degree in Creative Writing opens up exciting and varied career opportunities:

- + Writers
- + Publishers
- + Archivists
- + Media and PR
- + Teachers
- + Librarians
- + Editors
- + Journalists
- + Advertising

Find out more about our lifelong careers support: www.lancaster.ac.uk/careers

Kayla's placement



I completed a 5 week placement with Carcanet Press as part of a third year module. The experience gave me a whole new breadth of insight into marketing new book releases, and also the publishing industry as the complex creature that it is. Overall, I'm grateful to Carcanet and the University for giving me the opportunity to gain such experience, which in turn has helped me to shape my career prospects after graduation.

Kayla Jenkins
BA (Hons) English Literature and Creative Writing, graduated 2019

Beth's professional experience



In 2022, I published my first collection of poetry with Renard Press, *salmacis: becoming not quite a woman*, inspired by a module called 'Poetic Form' led by Paul Farley (Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature) and a module called 'Experimenting with Poetic Genre' led by Eoghan Walls (author of *Pigeon Songs*).

At the launch event in Lancaster Waterstones, all my tutors and lecturers turned up to show their support. Now, I'm working on my debut novel and YA tutor Elen Caldecott (author of *The Blackthorn Branch*) has helped me perfect my pitch while former workshop tutor Rachel Winterbottom (now Editorial Director at HarperVoyager) put me in touch with a literary agent in London.

The tutors in Creative Writing at Lancaster are some of the most supportive, enthusiastic, and creative people I have ever had the pleasure of working with - I wouldn't be the writer I am today without them.

Beth Train-Bown
BA (Hons) English Literature and Creative Writing, graduated 2022

Important information

The information in this publication relates primarily to 2025-26 entry to the University and every effort has been taken to ensure the information is correct at the time of printing (June 2024). The University will use all reasonable effort to deliver the courses as described but the University reserves the right to make changes after going to print. In exceptional circumstances that are beyond the University's reasonable control (Force Majeure Events), we may need to amend the programmes and provision advertised. However, in this event, the University will take reasonable steps to minimise the disruption to your studies. You are advised to consult our website at: www.lancaster.ac.uk/study for up-to-date information before you submit your application. More information on limits to the University's liability can be found in the Student Contract at: www.lancaster.ac.uk/terms. Further legal information may be found at: www.lancaster.ac.uk/compliance/legalnotice

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