City Research Online

City, University of London Institutional Repository

- **The 'how' of employability in the undergraduate curriculum**

- **Case study: BA English, City, University of London**

- **Concluding points**

City's BA English

- **City's mission:**
  'Academic excellence for business and the professions'

- **Launched 2016-17, first cohort graduated 2018-19**

- **City's second Arts & Humanities UG award (BMus)**

- **Drew on MAs in Creative Writing and Publishing, and adjoining BAs in Journalism and Sociology/Media**

What do publishing employers want…?

- **collaborative** skills

- **hybrid** skills

- **multi-skilling**

- **self-directed** learning

- personal **attributes**:

  '**flair, confidence, capability, ambition** and **vision.**'

(Skillset, 2009, pp.77-78)

Publishing MAs

Industry/alum project sponsors

Reflective practice

Group marks/ feedback

Part 1 (core)

EN1001 Fundamentals of Analysis and Criticism

EN1002 Literature in Historical Context

EN1004 Forms and Performances of Creative Writing

EN1005 Developing Creative and Professional Narratives

EN1006 The Novel, Authorship and Creativity

EN1007 Postcolonialism

Research / **Creative Writing** / **Professional**

EN1001	EN1002	EN1004	EN1003	EN1006	EN1007

Part 2 (core + electives)

EN2001 Shakespeare: Authorship, dramatic texts and audiences
EN2002 21st Century English and Digital Writing
EN2003 Creative Writing Workshop
EN2004 Contemporary Genre Fictions
EN2005 Romanticism
EN2006/7 Reading London 1 & 2
EN2008 Web Creation and Digital Storytelling
CC2007 Work Placement + *4 Journalism / Music electives*

Research / **Creative Writing** / **Professional**

	EN2001	EN2002	EN2003	EN2004	EN2005	EN2006/7	EN2008	CC2007
Research	■	■		■	■	■	■	■
Creative Writing	■	■	■	■		■	■	
Professional		■	■	■		■	■	■

Part 3 (core and elective)

EN3001/2/3 Major Project: Dissertation/Professional Portfolio/Creative Writing
EN3005 Literary Journalism
EN3006 Publishing in the Digital Age
EN3007 Global English and English Language Teaching
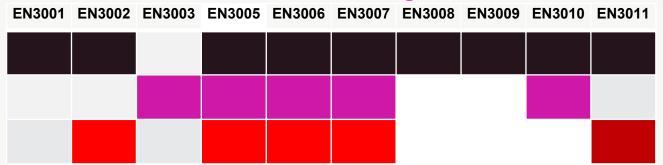EN3008 Intercultural Studies: Writing the Global City
EN3009 American Screenwriters
EN3010 Writing Women
EN3011 Place and Space + *1 Journalism and 1 Music options*

Research / **Creative Writing** / **Professional**

EN3001	EN3002	EN3003	EN3005	EN3006	EN3007	EN3008	EN3009	EN3010	EN3011

Modules with direct reference to writing, publishing / digital media and work-related projects or experience:

- Creative and professional **writing**, including journalism, publishing and writing reviews
- **Digital** writing and website prototyping
- **Publishing** and **journalism** projects
- Preparation for an **ELT** teaching qualification
- A **placement** or **professional project**

'Employability' assessments in academic modules:

- **Level 4:**
  - Write + perform a **play**
  - **Diary** + **group project** / presentation
  - **Podcast**

- **Level 5:**
  - Group **presentations**; creative + analytical **writing**
  - **Portfolio: book reviews** + materials for a **publisher's book launch**
  - **Portfolio: blog**, newspaper/magazine **article**, literary **guide**; **podcast**

- **Level 6:**
  - Analytical essay or creative **writing**
  - **Poster** + **oral presentation**

What did the students say?

'100% satisfaction, joint top in UK NSS:

BA English at City is ranked joint 1st in the UK, and ahead of any other English programme in London, for student satisfaction.

100% of our graduates are satisfied with their degree

100% of our graduates think we make the subject interesting

100% agree that we value their views about the course

100% agree that academic staff are good at explaining things

100% agree it is easy to contact academic staff.

Source: National Student Survey 2019'

(City website, October 2019)

77% 10:21

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125 YEARS

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☰ People

Aisha Patel

English BA (Hons)

My experience at City, University of London is one I will never forget.
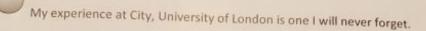
If you had told me when I first came to City what I would go on to achieve throughout the course, I would have laughed at you.

I graduated from the BA (Hons) English course in 2019 with a 2:1, my own children's picture book series, a successful blog, friends for life and a job working in a children's publishing company.

City gave me the stepping stones to my first job, in an industry I have long since dreamed of working in, and my experience working as a Student Ambassador was invaluable and boosted my confidence greatly.

I wholeheartedly believe that I would not be where I am today if it wasn't for the incredible support of the BA English team. They helped me believe in myself, my abilities and gave me every opportunity to succeed, even at times when it did not seem possible.

- Imogen Marshall

Conclusions for discussion

- **Satisfaction + Employability impact** √

- **Largely WP, BAME and female students** √

- **Pre-dated TEF but aligns to aims** √

- **Some reflections:**
  - disciplinary assumptions / interdisciplinarity
  - 'research v teaching'? → responsibility for employability?
  - assessment: habits / workloads / scale → *impact*
  - legacy courses/cultures…?
  - scaleability?

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