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Westminster Forum
Graduate Employability Conference:
Making Employability Everyone's
Business

Academic excellence for business and the professions

**125 YEARS** 

# Programme and assessment design for graduate outcomes

City's BA English

29 October 2019

Mary Ann Kernan Associate Dean (Student Experience) School of Arts and Social Sciences



- ■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





#### 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

#### 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

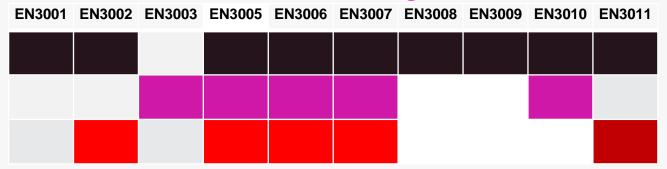
EN3008 Intercultural Studies: Writing the Global City

**EN3009** American Screenwriters

**EN3010 Writing Women** 

EN3011 Place and Space + 1 Journalism and 1 Music options

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



## 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 <u>City</u> 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 <u>website</u>, October 2019)



Aisha Patel | City, Univ... TWEET https://www.city.ac.uk/people/...











#### Aisha Patel

English BA (Hons)





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 √
- lacktriangleLargely WP, BAME and female students  $\sqrt{\phantom{a}}$
- ■Pre-dated TEF but aligns to aims √
- ■Some reflections:
  - disciplinary assumptions / interdisciplinarity
  - o 'research v teaching'? → responsibility for employability?
  - o assessment: habits / workloads / scale → impact
  - o legacy courses/cultures...?
  - o scaleability?

