

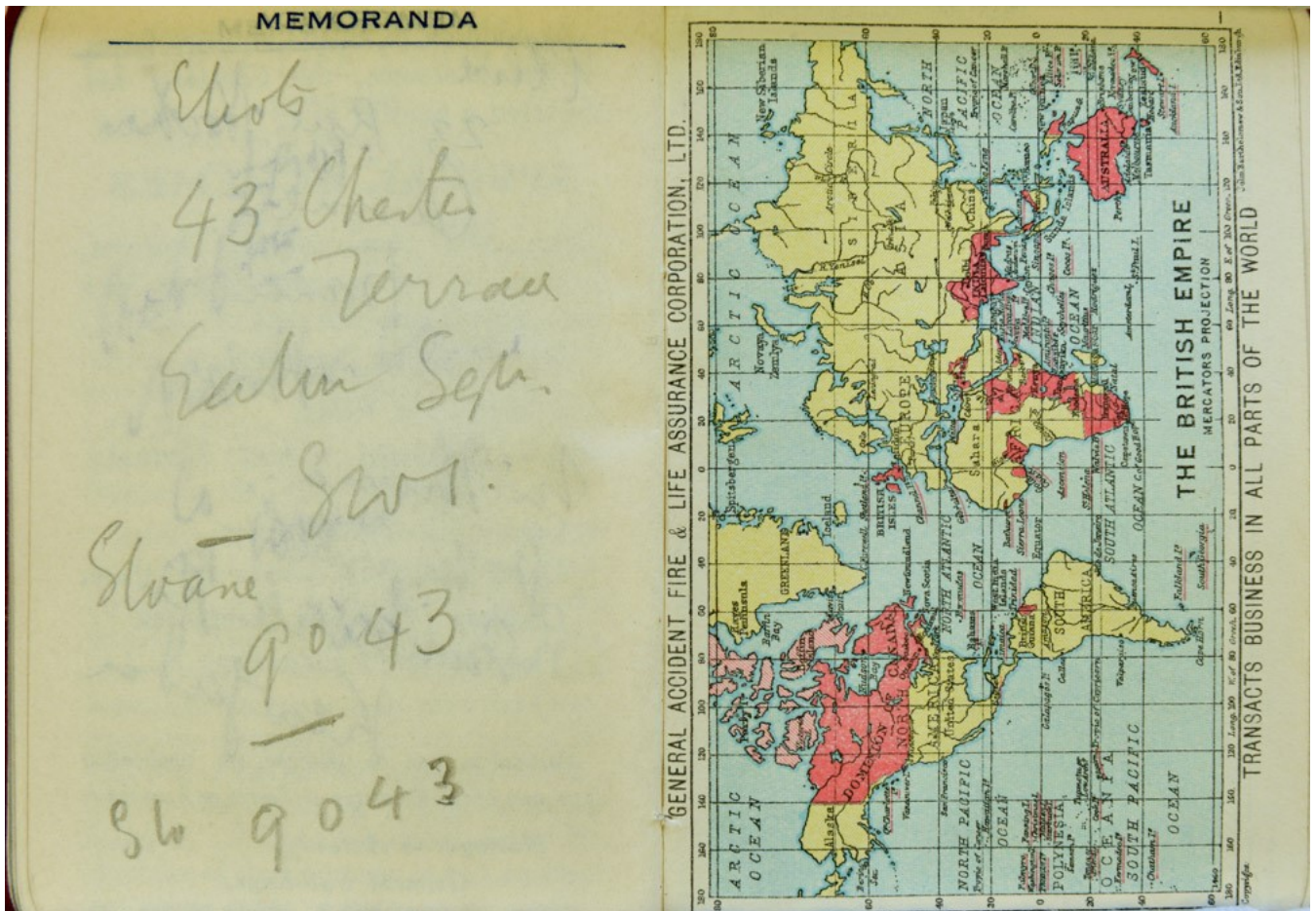
SCHOOL OF MEDIA, ARTS AND HUMANITIES

MA Modern and
Contemporary Literature,
Culture and Thought
Course handbook

2021-22

US

UNIVERSITY
OF SUSSEX



Cover Image from Virginia Woolf's engagement diaries, which are held at The Keep along with many other of Virginia Woolf and Leonard Woolf's - papers, as well as the Anna Mendelssohn and the Mass Observation Archives.

Photo: Stuart Robinson

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Key Contacts in the School of Media, Arts and Humanities

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Name and contact details	Role
Professor Vicky Lebeau V.A.Lebeau@sussex.ac.uk	Course Convenor for Q3501T MA in Modern and Contemporary Literature, Culture & Theory (Semester One)
Dr Richard Adelman R.Adelman@sussex.ac.uk	Course Convenor for Q3501T MA in Modern and Contemporary Literature, Culture & Theory (Semester Two)
Professor Keston Sutherland K.Sutherland@sussex.ac.uk	Overall Course Convenor for English MA
Dr Pam Thurschwell P.Thurschwell@sussex.ac.uk	Subject Head of English Literature
Professor Kate O’Riordan K.ORiordan@sussex.ac.uk	Dean of the School of Media, Arts & Humanities
Dr Gerhard Wolf G.Wolf@sussex.ac.uk	Associate Dean for Doctoral Students
Dr Andrew Blair A.M.Blair@sussex.ac.uk	Director of Teaching and Learning (PG)
Dr Melanie Green m.j.green@sussex.ac.uk	Director of Student Experience

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACTS

The MAH School Office is normally open 9am-5pm Monday-Friday for administrative matters such as course/module changes, bank and council tax letters, and general queries. The School Office staff can also direct you to the right place if you are not sure who to contact.

Please note that the MAH School Office may be closed, or may be operating online only, if local or national restrictions are in place in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. Please call or email the office to check before you travel.

Media, Arts and Humanities School Office

Arts A7

Tel: 01273 678001

Email: media-arts-humanities@sussex.ac.uk

Other key administrative contacts for postgraduate students are:

Name and contact details	Role
Grace Ryan englishpg@sussex.ac.uk	Course Coordinator Team
Dnyan Keni-Vaux D.Keni@sussex.ac.uk	Curriculum and Assessment Team
MAH-studentexperience@sussex.ac.uk	MAH Student Experience Team

MA in Modern and Contemporary Literature, Culture & Thought at Sussex

WHAT IS DISTINCTIVE ABOUT THE MA IN MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE, CULTURE & THOUGHT AT SUSSEX?

The MA Modern and Contemporary Literature, Culture and Thought offers you the opportunity to explore a wide range of cultural and critical work from the late 19th century to the present. Drawing on the research of faculty in English and related disciplines, our courses engage both established and emerging fields of study in the humanities: from decolonising modernism to the idea of literature in the institution and in society; from modernist and postmodernist literature and culture to the uses of the archive in creative writing; from critical theories of race and gender to the psychoanalysis of class and power.

The MA is characterised by its attention to how literature shapes, and is shaped by, its historical and cultural contexts. Our focus is on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, but many courses take a long view of the modern. We often work with different media (e.g. literature and film) as well as a range of genre (poetry, prose, fiction, drama) and theory. You will be able to reflect on the changing shape of the humanities in the 21st century, and to explore what a humanities sensibility can bring to the challenges of the contemporary world.

As an MA student at Sussex, you will also have access to a flourishing research culture. The weekly English Colloquium offers a range of speakers each term; there are also a number of research seminar series with links to the English research centres. The international reputations of our faculty, and the diverse research undertaken by our Masters and Doctoral students, offer a distinctive graduate culture in which to study the modern and contemporary.

The MA is run from within the School of Media, Arts & Humanities.

Key Course and Module Information

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

A student who has completed the MA in Modern and Contemporary Literature, Culture & Thought successfully should be able to:

- demonstrate a specialised knowledge of selected key issues in the interdisciplinary fields of modern literature, culture and thought;
- demonstrate writing skills in which a clear, concise and exact use of language is brought to bear on a rigorous consideration of texts, ideas and controversies within the field;
- demonstrate an ability to understand and to use, when necessary, the specialist concepts associated with literary and cultural studies, and with studies in modern literature;
- evaluate and critique existing theories in the field;
- cite relevant materials judiciously, and to good effect, in the construction of an overarching argument;
- read 'literary', 'historical' and 'theoretical' texts critically and attentively;
- demonstrate skill in time and work management, including the ability to read, write and research independently;
- put together well-written, fully-referenced word-processed essays;
- carry out a substantial and original piece of research within the field.

MODULE OPTIONS

Full time students will take 60 credits per term, made up of options. Part time students will take 30 credits per term.

Options can be chosen online via Sussex Direct. When making your choices, we recommend that you speak to the convenors of modules that you are interested in so you can be sure to make the right choice for you.

If you change your mind about your option, you can transfer to another module during the first two weeks of term, provided there is enough space. Contact the englishpg@sussex.ac.uk to request a module change form.

MA MODULE INFORMATION

FT= Full time PT1= Part time Year 1 PT2= Part Time Year 2

Q3501T MA in Modern and Contemporary Literature, Thought and Culture

Year 1 Autumn Term

FT- Two of the below; PT1/PT2 – One of the below

939Q3B Literature and Society, 1750-1890

'Literature & Society, 1750-1890' explores the interplay between the nationwide perspectives of social philosophy and the more individualistic concerns of literary culture in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It offers students a chance to make broad connections across the period, at the same time as providing them with in-depth knowledge of principal theoreticians of culture in these decades and their major works. Emphasis will be placed on the manner in which literary works can be read in conversation with, and in opposition to, social theory, with each seminar structured around close readings of an example of each style of writing.

943Q3A Decolonising Modernism

This module challenges the view that Anglo-American and European writers are the founders and sole practitioners of the experimental literature by which modernism is so often defined. This misconception continues to elide the inventions, creativity, and reach of avant-garde writers of the Global South and marginalised groups in the Global North. This module aims to broaden our modernist vantages not only in terms of temporality and geography, but also in relation to race, gender, sexuality, and class. You will engage with nineteenth- and twentieth-century writers from Asia, the Caribbean, South America, and Africa, as well as North America and Europe. The relationship between radical politics and radical aesthetics is a central concern. Be it poetry, fiction, drama, life writing, or polemics, all assigned literature is read in English, and issues of translation and transmission form part of our discussion.

956Q3B Psychoanalysis and Class

This module explores the emerging conjuncture between psychoanalysis and class. Psychoanalysis is a key interpretative framework in contemporary Western cultures, but there's a widely-held view that it has little to say about lives that fail to 'fit' its frames (class has been described as its 'last taboo'). However, there is increasing interest within psychoanalysis in the question of class exclusion, and the consequent 'gaps' in psychoanalytic theory and practice. Using methods of extra-mural psychoanalysis, this module puts key psychoanalytic texts alongside a small number of literary and visual texts to explore, and elaborate, this dialogue.

805Q4B Theories in Practice: Readings in Contemporary Theory and Literature

What is 'theory'? Although it goes in and out of fashion with the speed of rising or plunging hemlines, the use of theory, literary theory, or literary criticism as a way to read literary texts is always useful. And contrary to popular opinion, it's not the application of an arcane or secret language to garner a secret knowledge. Rather, it is a self-conscious and informed method of analysing the presuppositions behind the apparently natural way we read; indeed, sometimes it's a method of reading in itself, derived from a philosophy or theory of language, as is the case with Bataille or Derrida. Theory sounds dull, but really it's a creative practice, as is reading, which Walter Benjamin likened to telepathy.

This module seeks, through a number of case studies, to address a number of critical paradigms that have proved significant in the post-war period. In particular, notions of materialism, materiality and historicity will be set in tension with ideas about relativism, deconstruction and 'play' as very different ways of construing some iconic American texts. Alongside the close reading of primary and secondary texts, discussions in class will be directed towards such subjects as: the construction/reflection of subjectivity in language and discourse; the relation of the literary text to sociality; the effects and efficacy of modernist/avant-garde/postmodern literary techniques; and the writing of race, gender and class.

Year 1 Spring Term

FT- Two of the below; PT1/PT2 – One of the below

957Q3B The Avant-Garde in North America

This module incorporates poetry, film, dance, music, and the visual arts. It is assessed by either critical work, or by critical & creative work (writing and/or other forms of creative practice). We develop an understanding of American experimental culture from approximately 1945 to 1985. The writers and artists included challenge or trouble the conventions of their times. They test dominant ideas about what art is (what poetry should look and sound like, what art should try to do) and question the social norms and values that underpin such ideas. We focus on three sites of cultural production in particular, New York, San Francisco, and Black Mountain College. We remain alive to questions of Empire, migration, and the problematic exclusion of racial difference from theories of the avant-garde. An indicative list of subjects includes: New York School Poetry; Umbra; Queer Cinema; the San Francisco Renaissance; Pop Art; Judson Dance Theatre; Anarchitecture; John Cage and chance operations.

816Q3B Modernist and Contemporary Fictions

This module explores modernist and contemporary fiction in relation to history, aesthetics and politics. We will read a range of novels that engage with issues of artistic form, subjectivity, and modernity. We'll ask a variety of questions including: What stories about history, race, aesthetics, sexuality seem most urgent for these works? What borrowings from the past seem necessary, and what purposes do these borrowings serve? How do these works portray personal, communal, national, racial or mythic history, and what problems do they encounter in these portrayals? What attitudes to elite and mass culture do we find in the works we are

reading for this module? Are descriptive terms such as Modernism and Postmodernism still useful? How can we understand our current aesthetic and political situation in relation to works from the past? Authors have in the past included Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein, J.M. Coetzee, Nella Larsen, Toni Morrison, Colson Whitehead and Allan Hollinghurst.

937Q3A New Configurations in Critical Theory

This module will explore a wide range of contemporary critical approaches that have emerged not only out of the influential work of twentieth-century philosophy, literary theory, or psychoanalysis, but also from a variety of disciplinary quarters. Our investigations will be loosely mapped to four interrelated topoi - literature, aesthetics, politics, and science - but comprise a number of pressing theoretical issues. These are: affect, biopolitics, 'life', impersonality, animality, the posthuman, the status of conceptual art, the earth, political ontology, the common and communism, new materialisms, science and the brain, networks and information, systems theory and complexity theory. Possible readings include the work of Deleuze, Guattari, Agamben, Badiou, Rancière, Esposito, Bennett, Malabou, Smithson, or Luhmann.

944Q3B Voices in the Archives

This module invites you to consider the ways creative writing uses history, from pragmatic research strategies to theoretical implications. You will be invited to develop your own critical thinking and creative writing practice.

We think about how different literary genres engage with the past through form, narrative and literary language, looking at the cultural impact of contemporary historical fiction, and also considering work by poets and film-makers. Authors studied include Virginia Woolf, Sarah Waters, Toni Morrison, Hilary Mantel, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Michael Chabon, and Chinua Achebe. Creative writing workshops introduce key research skills, exploring the methodological implications of using physical and virtual archives. Working with historical newspapers, letters, diaries, prints, photographs and other documents, we immerse ourselves in old-fangled vocabularies, and experiment with using language from the past to inflect our contemporary voices. Topics for discussion include the critical and ethical implications of writing about real historical events and characters. We consider how contemporary writing is founded on a long tradition of writing from history - often re-visiting the past with a particular political or creative agenda. Additionally, we explore how historical fiction interacts with other genres, for example in the crime-historical hybrids of Walter Mosley. We consider theoretical work on historical fiction, memory and nostalgia by critics such as Georg Lukacs and Walter Benjamin.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Depending on where you were an undergraduate, you may find that you have either fewer or more teaching hours as an MA student than you did when you were studying for your BA. Full-time students will normally be doing two modules at any one time and each of these will involve a weekly seminar of just under two hours. All module tutors have weekly office hours that you are expected to use to ask for more targeted advice, or clarifications about module requirements and structures. You are also strongly encouraged to attend the English department research seminars plus any other relevant open seminars that are brought to your attention. In addition, you should spend at least 15 hours a week in individual study.

The University and the School of Media, Arts & Humanities provide certain facilities and resources – most notably, a library, the use of computers, and a space where learning is constantly pursued. Your tutors will direct your study with reading lists and all kinds of informal advice. Your ideas and conclusions will be put to the test in seminars, where you will be expected to have reached some views of your own and to be able to argue for them. Your written work will be formally assessed to determine your degree result, and you will receive feedback on your term papers as you go along.

Individual Study

The largest, and in many ways the most important, part of your working time will be spent on your own, or discussing problems with your fellow-students. It is important to organise your time effectively, and to plan your use of the library, especially if you have to do paid work as well as your academic work. A word of advice: always set yourself specific and realistic targets when you work, and take regular breaks. Set yourself to read a particular article or chapter of a book, or to work for a pre-determined length of time (say one and a half hours) and then pause when you have completed this task. A few periods of intense concentration, separated by short breaks, will serve you far better than any amount of time spent sitting at a desk but not really concentrating.

Module seminars

The focus of your work for each module will be a weekly seminar. Module seminars are compulsory. In many seminars, some form of presentation will also be required: your tutor will give you guidance on the form which presentations are expected to take and how to prepare them.

Essays

We require that your essays be professionally presented: typed or word-processed, with full scholarly references and a bibliography. Pay particular attention to matters of spelling, style and punctuation. Poor punctuation is one of the commonest failings in student essays, even at graduate level. If you are unsure about correct punctuation, get hold of a guide: there are several cheap and readable such guides on the market.

As a general guideline, a well-presented professional essay will be the result of (at least) three drafts. A first exploratory one in which you set down your ideas and support them with relevant evidence; a second one which goes over the first draft and reorganises paragraphs, expands sentences where needed, or cuts out repetitive chunks; and a third one, which should really be only a proofreading draft, to clear out spelling and/or punctuation mistakes, spot the repetition of

the sentence you cut and pasted too many times, or insert the verb/article/preposition you accidentally removed when cutting and pasting.

Module Evaluation

Student evaluations are available on-line at the end of each module and are scrutinised by the tutors associated with the module before it is taught again. These forms are anonymous, and are an opportunity for you to tell us what you felt about all aspects of the module, including the material covered, teaching methods, and the adequacy of library and web resources. We take your comments and suggestions for improvement very seriously. We do not, of course, guarantee to be able to meet all student requests. But we do guarantee to give active consideration to all serious suggestions for change and improvement.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Band	Percentage	Variation	Qualities
Distinction	70-100%	80-100%	Truly exceptional work that could be published with little or no further development or alteration on the strength of its original contribution to the field, its flawless or compelling prose, its uncommon brilliance in argument and its demonstration of considerable knowledge of the topics and authors treated on the module.
		70-80%	Outstanding work that might be fit for publication or for development into a publishable article. Work that is exceptional for its originality of conception and argument, its conduct of analysis and description, its use of research and its demonstration of knowledge of the field and of the core materials studied on the module.
Merit	60-69%		Good or very good work that is thoughtfully structured or designed, persuasively written and argued, based on convincing use of research and fairly original in at least some of its conclusions.
Pass	50-59%		Satisfactory work that meets the requirements of the module and sets out a plausible argument based on some reading and research but that may also include errors, poor writing, or some unargued and improbable judgments.
Fail	0-49%	35-49% Unsatisfactory	Work that is inadequate with respect to its argument, its use and presentation of research and its demonstration of knowledge of the topics and authors treated on the module, or that is poorly written and difficult to follow or understand.
		15-34% Very unsatisfactory	Work that plainly does not meet the requirements of the course and that fails to make any

		0-15%	persuasive use of research or to conduct any argument with clarity or purpose. Unacceptable or not submitted.
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TEACHING FACULTY

The following brief profiles show you the nature of the teaching and research interests of those associated with the MA in Modern and Contemporary Literature, Culture and Thought. You can find fuller details of tutors' interests and publications at their individual staff profiles on the Sussex website: use the staff search at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/people>.

Although not all of these tutors are offering a module in the current academic year, most of them will be available for MA dissertation supervision in the Summer Term.

Will Abberley's first monograph *English Fiction and the Evolution of Language, 1850-1914* (CUP, 2015) explored connections between theories of language change and various fictional genres in the long nineteenth century. More recently, his research has considered how concepts of biological mimicry and disguise (such as insect camouflage and cross-species resemblances) reverberated through Anglophone literature and culture in the long nineteenth century. He argues that these new ideas in natural history generated new ways of thinking about deception and copying as natural, perhaps unconscious processes. He compared the work of novelists such as Thomas Hardy and Charles Kingsley with the writings of scientific researchers such as Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace.

Peter Boxall has published widely on modern and contemporary writing. Recent books include *Twenty-First Century Fiction: A Critical Introduction*, *Don DeLillo: The Possibility of Fiction*, *Since Beckett: Contemporary Writing in the Wake of Modernism* and an edition of Beckett's novel *Malone Dies*. He is currently editing a volume of the *Oxford History of the Novel* with Bryan Cheyette. He is the editor of the UK journal *Textual Practice*.

Natalia Cecire specializes in American literature since 1880 and the theory of minor knowledges. Her research interests include history of science, poetics, gender and sexuality, childhood, media, and visual culture.

Sara Crangle specialises in vanguard literature, and has published articles on Dada, Joyce, Wyndham Lewis, and Gertude Stein, among other authors and topics. She is currently writing a book on Mina Loy and satire, and working on edited collections of the work of Anna Mendelssohn (also known as Grace Lake), whose archive she brought to Sussex Special Collections in 2010. With Hope Wolf, she directs the Centre for Modernist Studies.

Hannah Field is a Victorianist whose research interests include childhood studies, visual and material culture, and the history of the book. She is at work on her first monograph, concerning novelty picture books and child readers in Victorian Britain, and has also embarked on two new projects. The first centres on the figure of the dunce (an alternative child-type to the more frequently discussed—even over-exposed—infant prodigy) in the nineteenth century; the second uses print items rejected from legal deposit libraries to examine ideals of the universal repository from the sixteenth century to the present day (print culture from below).

Doug Haynes researches American and European modernist, postmodernist and avant-garde writing and culture, reading it alongside Critical Theory, or the work of thinkers from Marx through to Theodor Adorno. In fact, his focus is on writers and artists who seem themselves to straddle or anticipate this kind of aesthetic-theoretical axis and who are in some way transgressive, excessive or hilarious.

Sam Ladkin has two threads to his research, often interwoven, one through critical theory, and the other through multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary studies of the arts, with a jumping-off point in poetry. The threads braid in attempts to theorize the comparative close reading of artworks in multiple fields alongside an understanding of a necessary incommensurability at the point of practice. He researches modern and contemporary poetry, visual art, dance, theatre, music, and film, and draws on a number of academic disciplines for inspiration, including anthropology.

Vicky Lebeau researches psychoanalysis and modern culture; nineteenth- and twentieth-century fiction; theories of childhood and democracy; literature and visual culture; feminism and theories of social identity, and contemporary film and literature. She is currently completing a monograph on *Feeling Poor: psychoanalysis and class* and working on a book-length project on Freud and Frantz Fanon.

Rachel O'Connell started teaching at Sussex in January 2012. She studied for her PhD in the Department of English Literature at New York University, where she also taught literature and writing; she also has an MSc in Gender Studies from London School of Economics. She specialises in Victorian literature, especially the fin de siècle, and also in queer, gender, and disability studies. She teaches primarily critical theory and LBGT/queer studies.

Nicholas Royle works in the fields of modern literature and literary theory, as well as Shakespeare. His books include *Veering: A Theory of Literature, How to Read Shakespeare, The Uncanny, E.M. Forster, Jacques Derrida, Telepathy and Literature* and (with Andrew Bennett) *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory*. He is an editor of the *Oxford Literary Review*. He has also published numerous works of short fiction, as well as a novel, *Quilt*.

Minoli Salgado works on postcolonial literature and theory, as well as poststructuralist debates in history. She is the author of the critical study *Writing Sri Lanka*; her short fiction and poetry have been published internationally.

Sam Solomon works broadly on twentieth century and contemporary literature (poetry and cross-genre writing especially) as they relate to radical social movements; he has written on the connections of gay and women's liberation to political economy, particularly in the context of Marxist-feminist praxis. Research and teaching interests include: creative writing, feminism, Marxism, contemporary poetics, cross-genre and documentary writing, queer theory, critical university studies, Yiddish literature and culture, literary translation, aesthetics and politics.

Bethan Stevens has research interests which involve people and groups whose work crosses over between the visual and the literary, such as William Blake; the Flaxmans (an eighteenth-century family including an RA sculptor, book-illustrator and amateur writer); eighteenth- and nineteenth-century producers of chapbooks and illustrated novels; the Pre-Raphaelites; Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell.

Keston Sutherland works on 20th century and contemporary poetry; Marx, the reception and translation of Marx, and Marxism; Adorno; Wordsworth; Pope; Beckett. Recent books include *TL61P*, a suite of five greater odes dedicated to the now-obsolete product code for a Hotpoint tumble and spin dryer, *Stupefaction: a radical anatomy of phantoms*, *The Stats on Infinity*, *Stress Position* and *Hot White Andy*. He is the editor of *Quid*, Brighton's chief organ of neoprerafaelite totalitarian poetics, and co-editor of Barque Press. He is currently working in scholarly fashion on

the poetics of Marx's critique of political economy, on the problem how perfection may be disgusting, and on mouths.

Pam Thurschwell has worked on the intersection of psychoanalysis, new technologies and the supernatural at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, and new technologies. She has also published on music, popular culture and film. She is especially interested in the question of how you work on what you love, from high cultural artifacts to favorite pop songs. Her current book project is on adolescence and anachronism.

Hope Wolf enjoys thinking about what modernist formal experimentation might bring (however laterally) to contemporary questions and problems. These include: how we represent ourselves, how we relate to our environments and to one another, and how we measure or calibrate our experiences. She is also interested in comparing modernist modes of making with practices in the cultural sector, particularly the ways in which memories, and other aspects of people's lives, are collected, archived, curated and interpreted. Hope has explored these topics in publications on war memory, life writing and space, popular form (anecdotes, jokes, clichés, tweets and memes), and, most recently, the work of poet, artist and calligrapher, David Jones (whose work she regards as a kind of archive). Hope has also approached her research interests practically, in the making of archives and collections.

APPENDIX: MA DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

Dissertation Format

Your dissertation should contain:

- A **title page** that includes
 - the dissertation title
 - your candidate number (and NOT your name)
 - title and code for the dissertation module (e.g. Creative and Critical Writing Dissertation 895Q3)
 - month of submission (e.g. August 2019)
 - **the word count** of the dissertation
- Some students like to include an **acknowledgements** section, in order to thank those who helped with the dissertation in some way. This is optional; inclusion (or not) of acknowledgements will not affect the mark. This can sit on its own page between the title page and the abstract.
- An **abstract of no more than 300 words** that summarises the argument of your dissertation. This can sit on its own page between title page and dissertation.
- The **body of the dissertation**. How this is internally structured will depend on your course and your topic. You should discuss this with your supervisor; see also the section on structure below. This is the only part that counts toward the word limit for the dissertation.
- **References list** (bibliography). This should include all and only work that is cited within the dissertation. You can choose the style of citation and referencing (e.g. MLA, Harvard) but you must use a recognised scholarly referencing system and use it consistently. See more information below in the section on referencing.

- **Appendices** (if needed): Appendices are only needed if there is a data set or an element of “showing your work” that is necessary to demonstrate the work behind the argument in the dissertation. Your supervisor will be best placed to help you judge whether an appendix is needed. If you do have an appendix or appendices, make sure that:
 - No element of the argument is in the appendices. The dissertation should make absolute sense without the reader consulting the appendices.
 - The appendices are titled and (if more than one) lettered or numbered (e.g. Appendix A: Data collection questionnaire).
 - The appendices are each mentioned in the dissertation, so the reader knows why they are there.
 - If an appendix is not a document (e.g. it’s an audio recording) or if it’s too large for submission on Turnitin, consult with your supervisor about alternative ways to submit.

Word Limit

The word length for your dissertation stated on your Sussex Direct Study Page is a **firm and unequivocal limit**.

The University of Sussex Exams and Assessments regulations can be found here:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adge/standards/examsandassessment>

The maximum length for each assessment is publicised to students. The limits as stated include quotations in the text, but do not include the bibliography, footnotes/endnotes, appendices, abstracts, maps, illustrations, transcriptions of linguistic data, or tabulations of numerical or linguistic data and their captions. Any excess in length should not confer an advantage over other students who have adhered to the guidance. Students are requested to state the word count on submission. Where a student has marginally (within 10%) exceeded the word length the Marker should penalise the work where the student would gain an unfair advantage by exceeding the word limit. In excessive cases (>10%) the Marker need only consider work up to the designated word count, and discount any excessive word length beyond that to ensure equity across the cohort. Where an assessment is submitted and falls significantly short (>10%) of the word length, the Marker must consider in assigning a mark, if the argument has been sufficiently developed and is sufficiently supported and not assign the full marks allocation where this is not the case.

Does count toward word limit	Does NOT count toward word limit
The paragraphs within the body of the dissertation, including quotations from primary and secondary sources.	Title page and any section titles
	Abstract
	Acknowledgments
	Tables, illustrations, figures and captions thereof.
	References list/bibliography
	Source citation in footnotes or parenthetical citation (though the latter can be hard to “uncount”!)
	Appendices
	Linguistic example sentences <i>if</i> presented using the numbering format prescribed in the English Language & Linguistic writing manual.

Presentation

Format the dissertation so that it is professionally presented and easy to read and mark.

- **Include page numbers** (starting on the first page of the body of the dissertation).
- Double-space the body of the dissertation.
- Use 12-point font.
- Indent new paragraphs.
- Make sure to proofread the dissertation. And then proofread it again.

Structure

By structure, we refer to the intellectual organisation of the body of your dissertation. It is important to develop the right structure for your dissertation. While students often have queries about this, there is no generic advice that can be provided about the structure of your dissertation, as each project is different and requires its own unique style of presentation. Therefore, you are advised to discuss questions of structure with your Supervisor.

Ultimately, it is expected that you will develop a structure for the body of the dissertation that best frames and presents your ideas. In general it is assumed that it is likely that you will use section headings of some kind to break up the content of your dissertation (though this might not be the case if you are a Creative and Critical Writing student and have chosen to produce a shorter critical section that would not benefit from section headings). It is assumed that the section headings would correspond to the different stages, aspects, or case studies that make up your argument.

It is important to note that your dissertation will be structured differently depending on your MA programme. For example, if you are taking the MA in Creative and Critical Writing, your dissertation may be split into two parts, a creative section and a critical section. If you are taking the MA in Sexual Dissidence, which is an interdisciplinary programme, your decisions on how to structure your dissertation may be influenced by writing conventions in disciplines other than English. For instance, you might include a Literature Review, a convention in the social sciences. As stated, ultimately you need to make your own decisions as a writer on issues of structure, assisted by your Supervisor; it is expected that you will develop a structure for the written document that best frames and presents your ideas.

Referencing

You must reference all your sources for your dissertation. You are expected to use a scholarly referencing style in your dissertation, such as MLA or Chicago for instance. You can choose which style you use; whichever style you select, you are expected to use it well and consistently throughout the dissertation.

You can find advice on referencing and referencing styles at the [Skills Hub](#).

Sample Dissertations

While it is important to be aware that each dissertation is unique, you might find it helpful to look at sample dissertations by previous MA students. You will be able to access some sample dissertations on your Canvas dissertation module site. If you do not have access to this site, please email englishpg@sussex.ac.uk

Writing Support

Your dissertation supervisor is there to support you in your work for this project. You are also welcome to access other sources of writing support available at the University. There are two schemes that allow you to access free of charge, one-to-one sessions with people who can help. These are the School of MAH Academic Skills Advisors (please see the MAH Student Experience Canvas site for further information and to book) and the University of Sussex Royal Literary Fund Fellows – to make an appointment please go to the [Skills Hub](#).

It is a good idea to book well in advance as these are popular schemes. It is important to be aware that these resources are only available during term time, and are not available during the Summer Break.

Submission

You will submit your dissertation via Turnitin. Please do so with good time before the deadline. Keep in mind that personal computer problems do not constitute Exceptional Circumstances; if, for instance, work is late because your internet has a glitch, it will incur late penalties.

You can find guidance on online submission [here](#), where you can find a helpful video. You can also access the Canvas Student Guide [here](#).

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

It is important that the work you submit is your own and that you haven't submitted this work for any other assessment at Sussex or elsewhere (see statement below).

You can review the University's policies on plagiarism and academic misconduct [here](#).

The University of Sussex Exams and Assessments regulations can be found here:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adge/standards/examsandassessment>

These regulations state that:

Plagiarism is the use, without acknowledgement, of the intellectual work of other people, and the act of representing the ideas or discoveries of another as one's own in written work submitted for assessment. To copy sentences, phrases or even striking expressions without acknowledgement of the source (either by inadequate citation or failure to indicate verbatim quotations), is plagiarism; to paraphrase without acknowledgement is likewise plagiarism. Where such copying or paraphrasing has occurred the mere mention of the source in the bibliography shall not be deemed sufficient acknowledgement; each such instance must be referred specifically to its source. Verbatim quotations must be either in inverted commas, or indented, and directly acknowledged. For cases where work has been re-used see 'Overlapping material in Marking, Moderation and Feedback Regulations'.

'Overlapping material in Marking, Moderation and Feedback Regulations' states:

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Unless specifically allowed in module or course documentation, the use of the same material in more than one assessment exercise will be subject to penalties. If markers detect substantial overlap or repetition in the subject matter of a student's assessments within a single module or across other modules they must adjust the mark of the latter assessment so that the student does not receive credit for using the same material twice. Such cases are not processed as academic misconduct.