



Programme Specification

A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin a taught programme of study leading to an award from
The University of Sheffield

1	Programme Title	English Literature
2	Programme Code	LITU15
3	JACS Code	Q320
4	Level of Study	Undergraduate
5a	Final Qualification	Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA Hons)
5b	QAA FHEQ Level	Honours
6	Intermediate Qualifications	None
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	Faculty	Arts and Humanities
9	Department	School of English
10	Other Departments involved in teaching the programme	English Language and Linguistics
11	Mode of Attendance	Part-time
12	Duration of the Programme	6 years
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	None
14	Date of production/revision	March 2015

15. Background to the programme and subject area

The study of literature occupies a central place in any arts curriculum. At Sheffield, English Literature not only enables students to read a wide and fascinating range of writing from the past, but offers cogent and subtle methods for the discovery and analysis of a diverse range of contemporary cultural forms. This double endeavour is reflected in our modules, which balance a chronological 'core' with modules on theory and contemporary culture, thus introducing students to the key periods of English Literature since the Renaissance while encouraging in-depth study of the literature and critical issues of today. A third of the modules taken by students are chosen from an extensive list of options and offer the opportunity to study literature from a range of periods written across the English-speaking world, as well as film, theatre and practice-based options in which students learn on projects in community settings. Other modules offer opportunities to study work translated from the literature of other cultures. These option modules offer a plurality of approaches, driven by the wide-ranging interests of research-active academic staff.

English Literature is a rapidly-expanding academic subject and a feature of our programmes is the opportunity to follow modules in the related disciplines of Theatre or Film Studies, with the opportunity for practical theatre work and grounding in the institutions of theatre or cinema. Students may also take modules in English Language and Linguistics, within the School of English. A number of students follow the second year of their degree programme in colleges across the United States with whom we have longstanding exchange programmes, and students can also spend time studying in European universities through the Erasmus scheme.

Graduates from English Literature are prized for their writing and communication skills, and their ability to manage their work independently and creatively. English graduates pursue a wide variety of careers, such as law or business, the media or teaching, the creative arts and the public services.

For further detail, see the Department website: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/english>

16. Programme aims

Programmes offered by English Literature follow the general aims of the Mission Statement of the University of Sheffield (<http://www.shef.ac.uk/strategicplan/mvi>). In addition, the School also shares the following general aims in teaching the subject of English:

1. To encourage students in their enjoyment of and commitment to literature.
2. To deliver a diverse curriculum which encourages the understanding and analysis of the functions of language and literature within a wide range of historically and culturally distinct societies.
3. To develop students' capacity to analyse, evaluate and formulate critical opinion and to provide appropriate evidence in support of it.
4. Develop students' abilities in team-working, project management, effective communication and leadership.
5. To provide opportunities for students to specialise in the study of cinema and theatre.
6. To provide teaching that is informed by a departmental culture of research and scholarship.
7. To teach students how to collect, organise, and analyse data through a detailed study of literary texts and primary language sources.
8. To encourage students to work in flexible and creative ways, by developing skills and habits of independent study and independence of thought.
9. To help students prepare and present written work in an articulate manner, both individually and in collaboration, developing writing and communication skills in the transmission of critical opinion.
10. To provide a basis for the further study of English at all levels.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding - Upon successful completion of the programme, students will have gained:

K1	Sound knowledge and critical understanding of a wide range of literary texts from different periods of literary history;
K2	Sound knowledge and critical understanding of the principal literary genres of fiction, poetry and drama, as well as knowledge of other kinds of writing and communication: e.g. history, biography and print culture;
K3	Sound knowledge and critical understanding of related media, e.g. theatre and cinema;
K4	Sound knowledge and critical understanding of the historical and cultural traditions and contexts in which literature was written and read;
K5	Sound knowledge and understanding of a variety of critical and theoretical approaches and their appropriate terminology;
K6	Recognition of the relation of the discipline to associated disciplines – e.g. film and media, language and linguistics, history, science, philosophy - and the place of literature in the production of knowledge.

Skills and other attributes - Upon successful completion of the programme, students will have gained:

S1	Subject-specific skills in close reading and the analysis of texts;
S2	Communication skills in writing and speaking adapted to conveying the experience and analysis of complex texts;
S3	Subject specific and generic skills of critical reasoning and imaginative problem-solving;
S4	Bibliographic skills of presentation and referencing;
S5	Skills in independent thinking and research and the ability to organise work and time;
S6	Advanced skills of gathering information, from print and electronic sources as well as from a variety of other media;
S7	In addition, Drama Track students will build on generic group work and develop practical acting skills and presentational and reflective learning skills;
S8	Film Track Students will develop skills of close textual analysis of, theoretical approaches to, and the historical contextualisation of film.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

Development of the learning outcomes is promoted through the following teaching and learning methods:

- 1. Chronological Core Modules:** These are taught by means of lecture and seminar. Typically bi-weekly lectures will introduce students to key texts, theories and interpretative approaches to the chronological core of the degree. Then weekly tutor-led seminars of around 12 students will discuss individual texts or authors. (K1, K2, K3, K4; S1-6).
- 2. Option and Approved Modules:** Teaching on these modules may take a variety of forms. At Level 1, it may often be through lecture and seminar, but other options include workshop-based modules. Seminars in theatre and film are supplemented by programmes of screenings and theatre attendance. On Approved Modules at Level 2 and 3, students are guaranteed two contact hours, and the teaching may be either a tutor-led two-hour seminar, or a more formal lecture class, plus a student-centred seminar. Elements of class presentation and group presentation emphasise the skills of independent learning that these modules encourage. Most modules also include a significant web-based learning element, encouraging active student participation on bulletin boards etc.; the maintenance of student blogs; and the publishing of podcasts and video. (K3, K5; S5, S6).
- 3. Criticism and Literary Theory:** This is taught through lecture and seminar at Level 2 with this module building on work begun in Level 1. Theory modules encourage students to reflect on the subject of English, and broader questions of culture and politics as well as their own methods of interpretation. (K4, K5, K1, K2; S1-3).
- 4. Independent Study:** A significant part of studying English involves reading books, journals and online texts. Therefore English students are supported in learning to manage their time in order to best direct their own learning. A number of Approved Modules include significant elements of independent study and research, allowing students to develop projects which reflect their own enthusiasms. An optional dissertation, with the opportunity of sustained one-on-one tutorial supervision exists at Level 3, enabling students to pursue research interests and work over an entire year on developing their own research project. In addition, a Level 3 Special Project module offers students an opportunity to work closely with members of academic staff on a project with a community engagement focus. This module gives students opportunities to deploy and develop academic knowledge outside the academy. (K1; S5, S6).
- 5. Tutorial Office Hours:** Tutors and lecturers on all modules are available in twice-weekly office hours (full-time) or once-weekly (part-time), to provide assistance with reading and writing and to provide feedback on assessment.
- 6. Personal Tutoring Academic Support Meetings:** All students will have three scheduled meetings each year with their personal tutor to focus on key areas of academic development. These meetings will require advance preparation, and will involve structured discussion and feedback. Students are also encouraged to meet regularly with personal tutors in their twice-weekly office hours throughout the academic year.
- 7. Acquiring Skills:** Through all teaching and learning it is expected that English students will acquire and develop skills of articulacy, organisation, research and information technology competence. (S1-7).

Opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes are provided through the following assessment methods:

The School of English follows the Quality Assurance Agency's Subject Benchmark Statement for English in emphasising that 'English students should be encouraged to write essays as a fundamental part of their learning experience'. In this way, the School's assessment procedures aim to exemplify the statement that 'Assessment inheres in and informs the learning process: it is formative and diagnostic as well as summative and evaluative'. However, while retaining this emphasis on the essay, specific areas of the School's modules assess in a variety of ways.

- 1. Chronological Core Modules:** These offer a variety of assessment methods that are reflected throughout the degree. At Level 1, students are introduced to the importance of regular essays and given feedback within the teaching part of the semester and after they have been fully examined on modules. Assessment either runs continuously throughout the semester, or is by means of essay and exam.

At Levels 2 and 3, assessment will be in two parts, by means of a combination of essays, formal exams and take-away papers. Feedback from the first assessment becomes part of the diagnostic function of assessment, since it is written and returned during the teaching part of the semester. Students are required to demonstrate an understanding of a module as a whole. (K1, K2, K4; S1-6).

- 2. Approved (Optional) Modules:** A wide range of assessment methods are employed on these modules. At Levels 2 and 3, modules offer students the option of a single form of assessment for the whole module, encouraging them to work independently on it in association with feedback given to the formation of this work by their tutor. Other modules may ask for shorter essays, class presentations, group presentations, and

bibliographical or web-based projects, and assessment involving the use of technology and media. . (K5, K1, K2; S1-3).

- 3. Criticism and Literary Theory:** At Level 2, theory is assessed by a coursework essay and a final assessment essay. (K4, K5, K1, K2; S1-3).
- 4. Independent Study:** Most Level 2 and 3 Approved Modules offer students the opportunity to write longer, more extensively researched pieces of assessment. At Level 3 written requirements may involve pieces of up to 5000 words. Level 3 students are also offered an option of a dissertation of 8000 to 10000 words in the place of a final semester approved module. The Level 3 Project Module also offers an option of a longer piece of writing. (K1; S5, S6).
- 5. Assessing Skills:** As seen above, the skills that are assessed include writing, communication, the organisation of data, research, and bibliographical presentation. The School also subscribes to the following statement taken from the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Philosophy and endorsed by the Faculty of Arts and the University: 'Not everything that is valuable can be separately tested, measured or quantified' and that 'one of the distinctive benefits of a university education is the development of qualities of personal organisation and time-management which follow from the attribution to students of considerable responsibility in directing their own learning. Independence and self-motivation can be fostered but not taught in academic departments. The depth or extent of such personal qualities cannot be directly examined, though successful acquisition of them is expected to show through in the application of other skills - which are explicitly assessed. Difficulties such as these should not inhibit attempts to inculcate or formatively assess such skills as part of a degree programme.' (S1-7).

19. Reference points

The learning outcomes have been developed to reflect the following points of reference:

Subject Benchmark Statements

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx>

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (2008)

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/The-framework-for-higher-education-qualifications-in-England-Wales-and-Northern-Ireland.aspx>

University Strategic Plan

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/strategicplan>

Learning and Teaching Strategy (2011-16)

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/lets/staff/lts>

The research interests of the staff.

The Learning and Teaching Strategy of the School of English.

The research and teaching aims of the School of English.

20. Programme structure and regulations

Each year, students are required to take modules to the value of 60 Credits. Most modules offered by the School are worth 20 credits and last for a single semester of 15 weeks. Thus students generally follow three 20-credit modules per year. At Level 1, students may take up to 80 credits in unrestricted modules offered by other departments across the Faculty of Arts and the University. At Levels 2 and 3, students may also take unrestricted modules up to the value of 40 per year credits from those offered across the School of English or in other departments.

At **Level 1**, all English students, Single and Dual, take two core modules, Studying Prose and Studying Poetry. Single Honours students may also take 40 credits of unrestricted modules in other departments in the Faculty and 40 credits of unrestricted modules from other departments across the University. The School offers other unrestricted modules, in Theatre, Film, Critical Contexts, Creative Writing and Foundations in Literary Study modules covering (1) the Bible and English Literature and (2) Classical Sources for English.

At **Level 2**, English Literature students take two core modules. In semester one these are 'Renaissance Literature' and 'Criticism and Literary Theory', and in semester two, 'Genre' and 'Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature'. In addition, students can choose two from a large list of Level 2 Approved Modules. In place of one of these Approved Modules, they may also take 20 credits of unrestricted modules from other departments in the University.

At **Level 3**, students also take two core modules, 'Romantic and Victorian Poetry' and 'Romantic and Victorian Prose' in semester one, and 'Modern Literature' and 'Contemporary Literature' in semester two. Again, two from a

large list of Level 3 Approved Modules may be chosen. These include an optional 20-credit **Dissertation** for which research is carried out throughout the year, and which is completed at the end of semester two, and a 20 credit Project module. As at Level 2, students may also take one unrestricted module from other departments in the University in place of one Approved Module.

Detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules are published in the University Calendar available on-line at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/calendar>.

21. Student development over the course of study

Principles of Progression: Throughout their learning and assessment, students are encouraged to display evidence of a developing close engagement with texts and a growing conceptual sophistication. By the end of the 3 years of study they will demonstrate the accumulated knowledge of English Literature offered to them by the degree's chronological core.

Level 1 provides introductory training in literary method and practice, and provides students with opportunities to take option modules in theatre, film, critical methods, Creative Writing and the foundational sources of English Literature. By the end of the Level 1 programme in English Literature, students should possess a sound knowledge of ideas of author, form, genre and history. They will be encouraged in close reading skills, and will have been introduced to different theoretical approaches to writing and reading. Students will have a grounding in the principles of historical study, and an awareness of the distinctions between primary and secondary texts and of their implications. All students will have a competent understanding of the conventions of assessment.

Level 2 begins the chronological core which forms the basis of the degree programme. It is complemented by a core module in Criticism and Literary Theory, which extends the basic training in literary method provided at Level 1 towards the study and application of contemporary critical approaches. Students also begin to take options from the Approved Module programme.

By the end of the Level 2 programme in English Literature students should possess a sound understanding of the principles of the discipline in terms of author, mode, genre and history. They will be able to evaluate the appropriateness of a variety of literary-theoretical approaches. All students will continue to acquire a sound understanding of the principles of historical study and a developing conception of the history of writing in English. A facility in handling primary and secondary texts within the organisation and presentation of critical argument will be apparent throughout Level 2 work.

Level 3 continues and completes the chronological core of the degree up to a final semester core module on Contemporary Literature. It allows students to take two from a range of designated Level 3 Approved Modules designed to extend skills and knowledge acquired at Levels 1 and 2. Core modules emphasise the systematic understanding of substantial and complex Romantic, Victorian and Modernist texts. By the end of the Level 3 programme in English Literature students should possess critical understanding and sophisticated knowledge of the idea of the discipline in terms of author, mode, genre and history. They will be able to demonstrate the knowledge of, and the ability to specialise in, a specific literary-theoretical approach. They will have knowledge of the principles of the historical study of literature and of a broad range of writing across the history of English Literature up to the contemporary period. Analytical expertise in handling primary and secondary texts within the organisation and presentation of critical argument is expected. Students are also expected to show sophisticated skills in the presentation of their written work.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

Detailed information regarding admission to the programme is available at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/prospective/>

23. Additional information

The BA in English Literature is one of a number of popular undergraduate degree programmes taught within a School which is fully committed to research-led teaching at all levels. Thus the School's culture is enhanced by the presence of a large group of students reading for a range of Masters degrees and a lively and diverse group of research students alongside the many undergraduate students.

For further detail, see the department website: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/english>

This specification represents a concise statement about the main features of the programme and should be considered alongside other sources of information provided by the teaching department(s) and the University. In addition to programme specific information, further information about studying at The University of Sheffield can be accessed via our Student Services web site at www.shef.ac.uk/ssid.