

Programme Specification

Postgraduate Programmes

Awarding Body/Institution	University of London
Teaching Institution	Goldsmiths, University of London
Name of Final Award and Programme Title	MA by Research in English
Name of Interim Award(s)	N/A
Duration of Study/Period of Registration	1 year full-time or 2 years part-time.
UCAS Code(s)	N/A
HECos Code(s)	(100320) English Studies
QAA Benchmark Group	English and Comparative Literature
FHEQ Level of Award	Level 7
Programme Accredited by	N/A
Date Programme Specification last updated/approved	November 2017
Primary Department/Institute	English and Comparative Literature

Departments which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme
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Not Applicable

Programme overview

The MA by Research (MRes) is an intellectually flexible and rigorous programme that gives you the opportunity to develop research on a topic of your choice, at Master's level. As a one-year programme (or two years part-time), it can offer excellent preparation for larger and more advanced research projects such as the MPhil and the PhD, but it is also a degree in its own right. It may therefore be particularly appealing to those students who want a "taster" year of research before deciding whether to commit to a longer project, those who wish to explore the area in which they may want to specialise in a doctoral dissertation, or those attracted by shorter-term research at graduate level.

The aim of the MA by Research is to allow you to expand your knowledge and understanding of your chosen topic through independent research at Master's level, under the guidance of a supervisor, and in the context of a structured programme of study.

What you study: The programme of study comprises three assessed elements: two essays and a dissertation. The dissertation, on a topic of your choice, is submitted at the end of one year of study (two years if part-time). The essays are meant to support the work carried out in the dissertation. The first essay consists of a piece of bibliographical research, either in the form of a bibliographical exercise or in the form of a review of the critical/theoretical literature relevant to the dissertation topic. The second essay is an examination of the research methods adopted.

You are encouraged to attend at least one other module from the MA provision of the Department of English and Comparative Literature, chosen in agreement with your supervisor on the basis of what is most useful for your research. You do not submit any assessment for this module, and, in agreement with the supervisor, you may focus on specific aspects of the syllabus, and attend only sessions that are directly relevant to you. A second MA module from the Departmental provision may also be attended, under the same conditions, in the following teaching term.

You additionally attend the Department's Research Methods sessions in the Autumn Term.

You will also be able to take part in GLITS, the Department's weekly research seminar; and in the many activities organised by the Graduate School and other Goldsmiths departments.

Programme entry requirements

The standard requirement is an Upper Second-Class BA or equivalent degree in English, Modern Languages, or a related humanities/arts subject (e.g. Drama, Philosophy). Other qualifications of equivalent level are considered, as are degree results below the upper second class where there are clear indications of academic strength in your chosen specialism.

A high level of competence in written and spoken English is also required. If your first language is not English, you will need an overall IELTS Score 7.0 to include a minimum score of 7.0 in writing and of 6.5 in the reading, listening and speaking elements.

Students without BA-equivalent qualifications who have substantial work experience (e.g. in literary journalism, creative writing, publishing etc.) that may be considered as equivalent to formal qualifications may also be admitted.

Aims of the programme

The main purpose of the programme is to offer a challenging, flexible and advanced scheme of study invigorated by current research and in particular by the specialism of your supervisor.

- (1) enhance independent critical, evaluative and research skills
- (2) promote your analytical engagement with the complexities of advanced academic analysis and discourse
- (3) broaden your knowledge of literature relevant to your chosen topic and your ability to present it and deploy it in the development of your own research
- (4) deepen your understanding of your chosen topic of research and of relevant methodological approaches
- (5) develop your critical awareness of literary or theoretical language and its responses to historical, cultural or theoretical contexts
- (6) as appropriate to your topic, encourage you to develop your understanding of and proficiency in either interdisciplinary approaches to literature and culture, or to a particular period, or author, or a literary/critical/theoretical question
- (7) develop your methodological skills in the application of theory to literary and cultural criticism
- (8) encourage your self-development into professionally organised and interactive individuals by practising skills of selection, assimilation and communication in both written and oral domains
- (9) facilitate a learning environment that offers an appropriate foundation for further scholarly research in literary studies

What you will be expected to achieve

Students who successfully complete the MA by Research in English will demonstrate the following knowledge and skills:

Knowledge and Understanding		Taught by the following modules
A1	A selected topic in your field, and the secondary scholarly literature devoted to it	All modules
A2	Appropriate methodological, conceptual and analytical tools and terminology with which to engage with texts	All modules
A3	Advanced analytical skills specific to particular	

	genres, periods or methodologies related to your chosen topic	All modules
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Cognitive and Thinking Skills		Taught by the following modules
B1	Formulate clearly articulated and relevant research questions and sub-questions	All modules, and especially the Dissertation
B2	Conduct detailed and sensitive textual analyses informed by appropriate contextual knowledge	All modules, and especially the Dissertation
B3	Expound accurately and critically a selection of discourses in literary, aesthetic, cultural, linguistic, or social theory and criticism as appropriate to your research topic	All modules, and especially the Research Methods essay
B4	Synthesise expertly multiple, diverse, but relevant contexts and perspectives	All modules and especially the Bibliographic exercise
B5	Integrate diverse evidence into balanced, coherent and rigorous textual evaluations	All modules
B6	Develop the necessary advanced methodological skills and assimilate and critically evaluate different theoretical perspectives and alternative accounts of complex cultural formations	All modules, and especially the Research Methods essay and the Dissertation
B7	Formulate coherent and persuasive interpretations and arguments informed by high standards of scholarly accuracy	All modules, and especially the Dissertation

Subject Specific Skills and Professional Behaviours and Attitudes		Taught by the following modules
C1	Perceive and account critically and sensitively for interactions between cultural contexts and literary forms in the creation and reception of textual meanings	All modules, and especially the Dissertation
C2	Use a range of critical commentary and theoretical perspectives discriminatingly and skilfully	All modules, and especially the Research Methods essay and the Dissertation
C3	Show understanding of and ability to apply accurately the terminologies appropriate to advanced comparative, theoretical, literary, visual, linguistic and/or cultural studies as appropriate to your research topic	All modules
C4	Use sophisticated close reading to produce theoretically and contextually informed independent interpretations of selected texts according to the focus and scope of your research topic	Dissertation
C5	Produce own written work to high scholarly	

	standards in organisation, relevance, expression, referencing, and bibliography	All modules, and especially the Dissertation
C6	Design and execute an independent extended project of research	Dissertation
C7	Prepare for regular supervision by identifying items for discussion and demonstrating ability to elaborate feedback	All modules, and especially the Research Methods essay and the Dissertation

Transferable Skills		Taught by the following modules
D1	Enhanced communication and discussion skills, in written and oral contexts	All modules
D2	Facility in accessing verbal data using hard copy / electronic resources	All modules
D3	Advanced ability to compare and evaluate different verbal or visual materials	All modules
D4	Capacity to handle ideas in rational, critical and evaluative ways	All modules
D5	Open-mindedness and capacity for independent judgement	All modules
D6	Management of own learning, including working effectively to deadlines	All modules
D7	Application of skills of detailed close analysis to a variety of texts and contexts	All modules
D8	Power to organise information cogently, and to assimilate and evaluate competing arguments	All modules

How you will learn

Through independent but guided research, supported by individual supervision, you will be aided in defining your topic, formulating your research questions, selecting the secondary material, identifying appropriate methodological approaches, and articulating your ideas. All Learning Outcomes are supported in this way; additionally, attendance at one or more relevant modules from the MA provision of the Department, chosen in agreement with your supervisor, will further enhance your learning process. All modules provide a weekly seminar for every participant, which reinforces knowledge gained through reading, lectures and presentations, and enables you to enhance and develop your understanding.

Through self-managed learning you further develop your Cognitive & Thinking Skills and Transferable Skills. Powers of expression and discussion, and the handling of ideas, are developed everywhere in the programme, since all assignments require production of written work that communicates and argues well, and all audited modules use seminar discussion as part of the learning process.

How you will be assessed

All skills are assessed through the essays and the dissertation.

Summative assessment takes the following forms, allowing you to demonstrate a range of appropriate skills: (i) by 4-5,000-word essays for the Bibliographical Exercise and the Research Methods essay (ii) by a 30,000-word dissertation. Essay deadlines will be staggered, allowing for feedback and formative assessment before the dissertation is completed

C7 is not formally assessed, but it will support your achievement in the assessed modules.

Transferable skills are repeatedly tested during the programme through the requirement to produce, by specified dates, written discussions, through the dissertation, the dedicated supervisions, and through participation in audited seminars.

Your written work is assessed with regard to (a) the Department's general assessment criteria, (b) the particular assessment criteria identified for a given module, and (c) the requirements of the specific essay or assignment undertaken.

The Department's general assessment criteria for written work are as follows and should be borne in mind throughout your work in your degree programme:

1. Relevance of discussion and argument to the topic; ability to discriminate between merely descriptive statements and critical analysis, and to identify pertinent issues with precision.
2. Ability to present, sustain and conclude fluently a discussion, investigation or complex argument based on close and imaginative engagement with the theories and text(s) in question, and to draw reasoned and logical conclusions.
3. Clarity of the work in terms of legibility, spelling, punctuation and grammar; and the professionalism of the presentation.

Assessed work is given a percentage mark. The following explanations will give an idea of how marks are assigned. (But note that marking criteria are flexible. An excellent discussion may be compromised by poor expression or organisation: an eloquent discussion may be fundamentally irrelevant. Examples of other factors adversely affecting a mark would be repetition, or manifest incompleteness or serious failure to meet the prescribed length.)

Marking criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/Exceptional)	Evidence of extensive relevant reading and an outstanding grasp of current major issues in the field. This knowledge will have been reviewed critically with insight and independence of thought. Arguments and the presentation of evidence will demonstrate sophisticated reasoning and be exceptionally clear, well-focused and cogent.
70-79%	Distinction	Mature and full grasp of issues raised by the question, communicated fluently within a structured essay demonstrating analytical rigour and well substantiated independent thought and reaching cogent conclusions; supported by detailed insight into primary texts and into context and/or secondary criticism; a professional standard of execution.
60-69%	Merit	Lucid and analytical discussion showing clear understanding of the principal issues raised by the question/topic, and making aptly selective use of module text(s) and concerns and of relevant contextual or secondary criticism in a structured way to reach substantiated conclusions. Well articulated and presented to a good standard of professionalism.
50-59%	Pass	Adequate discussion showing understanding of some of the issues raised by the question/topic, making use of module text(s) and concerns in a reasonably coherent

		way to reach sufficiently substantiated conclusions. Satisfactorily clear, with an adequate standard of presentation and execution.
30-49%	Fail	At this level of study, an essay, dissertation or examination answer may show adequate knowledge of the syllabus but fail on grounds of inadequate relevance to the question/topic; it may be fluently argued but lack adequate evidence of the student having understood the work set for the module; or it may be relevant and well-informed but incoherent in expression and argument.
10-29%	Bad fail	A submission that shows a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes. Written work shows no evidence of an attempt to address the question.
1-9%	Very bad fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes.
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment.

How the programme is structured

The programme is available in full-time (12 months) and part-time (24 months) modes. It awards a total of 180 credits. The programme of study comprises three assessed elements: two essays, each worth 15 credits, and a dissertation, on a topic of your choice, worth 150 credits. The essays – a piece of bibliographical research, either in the form of a bibliographical exercise or in the form of a review of the critical/theoretical literature relevant to the dissertation topic; and an examination of the research methods adopted – support the discussion of your topic, carried out in the dissertation.

Full-time students submit the Bibliographical Exercise in January and the Research Methods essay in February, and the Dissertation on the first Friday of September. (Full-time students who start in January submit the Bibliographical Exercise in April, the Research Methods essay in June, and the Dissertation on the first day of the spring term of the following year.)

Part-time students submit the Bibliographical Exercise in April of their first year; the Research Methods essay in September of the first year, and the dissertation on the first Friday of September of their second year. (Part-time students who start in January submit the Bibliographical Exercise in September of the first year, the Research Methods essay in January of their second year, and the Dissertation on the first day of the spring term of the second year).

You are also encouraged to attend at least one taught module from the MA provision of the Department of English and Comparative Literature, chosen in agreement with your supervisor on the basis of what is most useful for your research. A Complete list of options will be provided before you start. You do not submit any assessment for this module, and, in agreement with the supervisor, you may focus on specific aspects of the syllabus, and attend only sessions that are directly relevant to you. An additional MA module from the Departmental provision may also be attended, under the same conditions, in the following teaching term.

You additionally attend the Department's own Research Methods course in the Autumn Term. (Students who enrol in January will attend Autumn term events in the following academic year.)

In accordance with Goldsmiths' general MA examination regulations, you must pass all assessed elements in order to be awarded the degree.

Part-Time Mode - Year 1:
EN71067B Bibliographical Exercise and EN71016B Research Methods.

Progression requirements Yr 1 to Yr 2: EN71067B Bibliographical Exercise must be passed to progress to year 2.

Part-Time Mode - Year 2:
EN71027A Dissertation.

Academic support

The Department recognises the importance of supporting students' learning with high quality teaching that is responsive to their individual and collective needs. The programme has been designed to be as accessible as possible to all students. Teaching takes place predominantly via individual tutorial support, though auditing of at least one taught module is also strongly recommended. The supervisor and audited module convenor(s) are available to discuss any issues arising throughout the programme of study. Additional direct support is available through staff being available at guaranteed consultation times during term. Outside these hours, students may arrange an appointment with any member of staff via email or telephone.

Specific information will be available on the Goldsmiths Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), at both a departmental level and through the VLE resources dedicated to this programme. Students are also expected to attend special induction meetings prior to the commencement of teaching, when they are offered further guidance regarding schedules and enrolment procedures.

Feedback will be provided on essays submitted for assessment. The Department will always seek to provide feedback on submitted assessment before the next assessment deadline for the programme, so that summative assessment can also function as formative assessment.

Support for independent study is through the conjoined library and electronic resources in the Rutherford Building, which, as well as books and journals (in hard copy or electronic format) also hosts a large collection of multimedia and audio visual material. You are also expected to use the extensive collections of Senate House Library (the central University of London Library). Guided Tours and training in the facilities of Senate House Library will be provided. Video and other audio-visual media may also be used to support the programme, if appropriate.

The Supervisor also acts as your Personal Tutor: to offer advice, guidance or clarification of available modules, requirements and regulations; and to monitor your progress through the programme. The Supervisor can also offer support in cases of academic difficulty. Should further advice be necessary, the Department's Postgraduate Senior Tutor, MA Examinations Officer and the Head of Department can also be consulted.

College Support:

Goldsmiths provides a wide range of pastoral services to support students. Student Advice and Wellbeing provides assistance with practical issues including funding and housing, support for mental health and a Chaplaincy linked to local faith communities. We have an agreement with a local NHS doctors surgery to provide medical services to our students. Our Inclusion and Learning Support team provide sessions to help students improve their academic skills and they are able to arrange support and reasonable adjustments for disabled students including access to assistive technology.

Students are also able to consult the Royal Literary Fund Fellows, professional writers sponsored by the RLS, who visit Goldsmiths to foster good writing practice across all disciplines and media. Appointments with the Fellows are made via the English Language Centre.

The College's Graduate School (in the Whitehead Building) houses a number of online resources and offers space for seminars and the informal exchange of ideas, and it provides a supportive infrastructure for all postgraduate students, and there is a wide range of student support services within the College, including support for English for academic purposes and English language for students whose first language is not English via the English Language Centre.

Links with employers, placement opportunities and career prospects

Graduates of this programme have gone on to pursue careers in publishing, journalism, public relations, teaching, advertising, the civil service, business, industry, the media.

Skills: Transferable skills, including enhanced communication and discussion skills in written and oral contexts; the ability to analyse and evaluate a wide variety of spoken and written texts from informal as well as institutional settings; an understanding of the concept of communicative competence; the ability to organise information, and to assimilate and evaluate competing arguments.

The requirements of a Goldsmiths degree

Master's Degrees

All Master's degrees at Goldsmiths have a minimum value of 180 credits. Programmes are comprised of modules which have individual credit values. In order to be eligible for the award of a Master's degree students must have passed all modules on the programme.

Intermediate Exit Points

Some programmes incorporate intermediate exit points of Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma, which may be awarded on the successful completion of modules to the value of 60 credits or 120 credits respectively. Individual programmes may specify which, if any, combination of modules are required in order to be eligible for the award of these qualifications. The awards are made without classification.

Final Classification

There are four possible categories of final classification for Master's degrees: Distinction, Merit, Pass and Fail.

For further information, please refer to the Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Students, which may be found here: <http://www.gold.ac.uk/governance/studentregulations/>

Programme-specific rules and facts

Progression Requirement

Part-time students must have passed EN71067B Bibliographical Exercise before proceeding to the final year of the programme.

If a module is failed, two further attempts are possible, but marks will be capped at the pass mark (50%).

Programme costs

General Costs

In addition to your tuition fees, you will be responsible for meeting standard costs associated with your study. Find out more information here: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/programme-costs>

How teaching quality will be monitored

Goldsmiths employs a number of methods to ensure and enhance the quality of learning and teaching on its programmes.

Programmes and modules must be formally approved against national standards and are monitored throughout the year in departmental staff / student forums and through the completion of module evaluation questionnaires. Every programme also has at least one External Examiner who produces an annual report which comments on the standards of awards and student achievement.

This output is considered with other relevant data in the process of Annual Programme Review, to which all programmes are subject, and which aims to identify both good practice and issues which require resolution.

Every six years all programmes within a department are also subject to a broader periodic review. This aims to ensure that they remain current, that the procedures to maintain the standards of the awards are working effectively and the quality of the learning opportunities and information provided to students and applicants is appropriate.

Detailed information on all of these procedures are published on the webpages of the Quality Office (<http://www.gold.ac.uk/quality/>).