

MA Script Writing

Programme Specification

Awarding Institution:

University of London (Interim Exit Awards made by Goldsmiths' College)

Teaching Institution: Goldsmiths, University of London

Name of Final Award and Programme Title: MA Script Writing

Name of Interim Exit Award(s): Postgraduate Certificate in Script Writing

Duration of Programme: 1 year full-time

UCAS Code(s): Not applicable

HECoS Code(s): (100729) Scriptwriting

QAA Benchmark Group: Not applicable

FHEQ Level of Award: Level 7

Programme accredited by: Screenskills

Date Programme Specification last updated/approved: December 2020

Home Department: Media, Communications and Cultural Studies

Department(s) which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:

Not applicable

Programme overview

This programme focuses on the creative, analytical and professional aspects of script writing, in the context of the contemporary film, television and radio industries.

The MA Script Writing is accredited by Skillset (further to the Department's accreditation as a Skillset Media Academy) and currently receives funding to support some student bursaries (for more information visit the Skillset website).

The programme is aimed at those who already have some writing experience, but who want to develop professional skills and expertise as screen or radio script writers.

It's geared towards developing each student's own writing and distinctive voice, to enable you to pitch for employment and production funding in a highly competitive industry.

You complete the programme with a feature film or equivalent television or radio script. You also gain knowledge of the film, television or radio industries and some of the contacts necessary to market your projects.

Programme entry requirements

You will normally hold an appropriate first degree in the Humanities and a proven commitment to creative writing. Those without a degree, or one in an unrelated field, may be subject to a qualifying exam. Alternatively, applicants without a first degree may have sufficient practical experience as a writer and commitment to reflecting on their practice to qualify for the programme. In addition, it is expected that you will provide evidence of your script writing abilities in the form of a ten-page short script and ideas for a Feature Script.

If your first language is not English, you normally need a minimum score of 7.0 in IELTS (including 7.0 in the written element) or equivalent.

Aims of the programme

This one-year full time Masters programme focuses on both the creative and analytical aspects of script writing. These are understood in the context of the contemporary film, television and radio industries.

The compulsory module takes a practical approach. Students are required to write a long form treatment and a long form script for either Film, TV or Radio.

In addition to the compulsory module the programme requires you to take modules provided by other of the Department's related MA programmes. These modules provide the theoretical, cultural and industrial context for you to understand your own and others work.

The programme is aimed at students wanting to develop their professional skills and expertise as screen or radio script writers. It is designed to help equip you with the knowledge, skills and experience for employment in writing and script development areas of the film, television and radio industries. It is intended that you will graduate with a portfolio of sufficiently strong scripts to enable you to pitch for employment and production funding in what is a highly competitive industry.

What you will be expected to achieve

The programme aims to enable you to identify and develop your unique creative writing voice; to hone your professional script writing skills (in a range of formats and media) to industry standards; to become familiar with the industrial context and analytical structure which make a script creatively and commercially successful; and to develop sound editorial judgement on others' work.

You will finish the programme with a feature film or equivalent television or radio script written to a professional industry standard. You will also have a knowledge of the film, television or radio industries and some of the contacts necessary to market your projects.

Further to subject specific knowledge, understanding and skills acquired on the programme, you should also develop a range of transferable skills and qualities necessary for employment in a variety of contexts. The Quality Assurance Agency describes these qualities as: effective communication skills, the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility, decision making in complex and un-predictable situations and the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development. Such skills are inherent in most of what you will learn on this programme.

Students who exit the programme with the award of Postgraduate Certificate in Script Writing should be able to apply the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Some analytical methods to identify and describe the structural & narrative techniques employed in screen scripts	All modules
A2	Some knowledge of specific genres, characteristics and formats of writing for film, television and radio	All modules
A3	Some understanding of industrial working practices in script development & production in film, television and radio	All modules
A4	Some understanding of the key issues determining the cultural & social significance of your own work and that of others	All modules

Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Some level of conceptual, critical and evaluative skills to enable you to analyse and deconstruct any script or drama and, and to make informed and reasoned creative decisions between your own ideas and those of others	All modules

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B2	Constructive written communication and management skills	All modules
B3	A good level of organisational skills in the management of complex creative activities and processes	All modules
B4	Some confidence, knowledge and skills to work both independently and as a team member as well as flexibly, responsibly and to a deadline, in the preparation and realisation of work	All modules

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Some strategic skills as appropriate to the development or presentation of creative work	All modules
C2	A moderate level of technical skills in the initiation, research, development and realisation of scripts that seek to be original and to maximise the potential of a medium to engage an audience	All modules

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Some level of conceptual, critical and evaluative skills to enable you to analyse and deconstruct any script or drama and, and to make informed and reasoned creative decisions between your own ideas and those of others	All modules
D2	Constructive written communication and management skills	All modules
D3	A good level of organisational skills in the management of complex creative activities and processes	All modules
D4	Some confidence, knowledge and skills to work both independently and as a team member as well as flexibly, responsibly	All modules

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
	and to a deadline, in the preparation and realisation of work	
D5	Some strategic skills as appropriate to the development or presentation of creative work	All modules
D6	A moderate level of technical skills in the initiation, research, development and realisation of scripts that seek to be original and to maximise the potential of a medium to engage an audience	All modules

Students who finish the programme with the MA Script Writing should be able to apply the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	A comprehensive range of analytical methods to identify and describe the structural & narrative techniques employed in screen and radio scripts	All modules
A2	Comprehensive knowledge of specific genres, characteristics and formats of writing for film, television and radio	All modules
A3	A good understanding of industrial working practices in script development & production in film, television and radio	All modules
A4	An understanding of the key issues determining the cultural & social significance of your own work and that of others	All modules

Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	A high level of conceptual, critical and evaluative skills to enable you to analyse and deconstruct any script or drama and, and to make informed and reasoned	All modules

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
	creative decisions between your own ideas and those of others	
B2	Constructive written communication and management skills	All modules
B3	A professional level of organisational skills in the management of complex creative activities and processes	All modules
B4	The confidence, knowledge and skills to work both independently and as a team member as well as flexibly, responsibly and to a deadline, in the preparation and realisation of work	All modules

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Conceptual knowledge and critical reasoning skills in complex creative problem solving and in the development of sound & professional editorial judgement. This may be applied to the development of your own work and that of others	All modules
C2	A high level of technical skills in the initiation, research, development and realisation of scripts that seek to be original and to maximise the potential of a medium to engage an audience	All modules
C3	Strategic skills as appropriate to the development or presentation of creative work	All modules

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	A high level of conceptual, critical and evaluative skills to enable you to analyse and deconstruct any script or drama and, and to make informed and reasoned	All modules

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
	creative decisions between your own ideas and those of others	
D2	Constructive written communication and management skills	All modules
D3	A professional level of organisational skills in the management of complex creative activities and processes	All modules
D4	Confidence, knowledge and skills to work both independently and as a team member as well as flexibly, responsibly and to a deadline, in the preparation and realisation of work	All modules
D5	Conceptual knowledge and critical reasoning skills in complex creative problem solving and in the development of sound & professional editorial judgement. This may be applied to the development of your own work and that of others	All modules
D6	Strategic skills as appropriate to the development or presentation of creative work	All modules
D7	A high level of technical skills in the initiation, research, development and realisation of scripts that seek to be original and to maximise the potential of a medium to engage an audience	All modules

How you will learn

A variety of teaching methods will include lectures, seminars, screenings, discussions and individual tutorials to cover all of the above Knowledge and Skill Outcomes. The tutorials providing individual feedback is particularly important for supporting students in the application of their knowledge and understanding to their own work.

In addition, the following teaching strategies are particularly relevant to specific outcomes:

Workshops with constructive feedback from fellow students in a supportive environment, for achieving cognitive and thinking and subject-specific outcomes.

Specialist industry invited Lecturers for the acquisition of subject-specific skills.

Unrehearsed script readings for achieving the majority of cognitive and thinking and subject-specific outcomes Attending film festivals, conferences and other industry events for MA outcome A4.

Mentoring from industry professionals for MA outcomes A4 and B1.

The use of student's own work as the foundation and motivation for skills development - a problem orientated approach for B1, B4 and C3.

How you will be assessed

Several of the programme learning outcomes will be assessed by the Portfolio comprising long form script and treatment. These submissions will be used to assess MA outcomes A1, A2, B1, B3 and C1, as will the Short Form Script.

Examples of Script Readers Reports on other material will enable assessment of outcomes A1, A2, A3, B1, B2 and D4.

Essays submitted for optional modules will enable assessment of outcomes A3 and A4.

Marking criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/ Exceptional)	Practice Grading Criteria Awarded when a candidate satisfies the requirements for a distinction but to an outstanding degree. Essay Grading Criteria Awarded when a candidate satisfies the requirements for a Distinction, but to an outstanding degree. Such work may be of publishable quality and will make a significant contribution to debate within the field.
70-79%	Distinction	Practice Grading Criteria Work of an excellent overall quality. It will consist of an original and ambitious project which has achieved its goals with a good to high level of technical competence. It will be informed both by the strength of its original idea(s) and an appropriate and distinctive structure. It will have been well-researched/planned and exhibit a highly developed critical

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
		<p>awareness of the medium for storytelling that indicates an excellent grasp of the means by which the audience's involvement may be sustained. It will demonstrate the very effective application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes/assessment section of the programme specification.</p> <p>Essay Grading Criteria Awarded when the assessed work demonstrates the application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the Learning Outcomes of the module to a very effective extent. The work will show evidence of extensive relevant reading and an impressive grasp of the 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, with clear awareness of issues of methodology and evidence, and will be particularly clear, focused and cogent.</p>
60-69%	Merit	<p>Practice Grading Criteria Work that overall achieves a high standard. The work will have achieved the majority of its goals and will demonstrate a significant degree of originality and ambition with a good level of technical competence. It will be based on an original idea and will be well-structured. It will show significant evidence of research/ planning and demonstrate a critical awareness of the medium for storytelling that indicates a very good grasp of the means by which the audience's involvement may be sustained. It will demonstrate the effective application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes/ assessment section of the programme specification.</p> <p>Essay Grading Criteria Awarded when the assessed work demonstrates the application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the Learning Outcomes of the module to an effective extent. The work will show consistency and fluency in discussing and evaluating evidence and theories drawn from a wide range of sources. The candidate will demonstrate the</p>

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
		ability to relate their reading to the topic, and will clearly have understood and assimilated the relevant literature.
50-59%	Pass	<p>Practice Grading Criteria Work of an overall satisfactory standard showing degrees of originality and ambition and the achievement of its primary goal(s). Technically it will be competent in quality with a recognisable and successful overall structure. It will be based on a considerable level of research/planning and exhibit some critical awareness of the medium for storytelling that indicates a good grasp of the means by which the audience's involvement may be sustained. It will demonstrate the good application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes/assessment section of the programme specification.</p> <p>Essay Grading Criteria Awarded when the assessed work demonstrates the application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the Learning Outcomes of the module to a satisfactory extent. There is clear evidence of knowledge and understanding, but there may be limited development of ideas, critical comment or methodology. Within these limitations there will be an indication that the candidate has grasped fundamental concepts and procedures from the module.</p>
30-49%	Fail	<p>Practice Grading Criteria Work of an overall unsatisfactory standard, demonstrating little originality or ambition. It is likely that its goals will not have been achieved to a satisfactory extent and its level of technical competence will range from adequate to poor with a weak structure. It will show evidence of a lack of research/planning and indicate little critical understanding of its medium for storytelling with uneven performances and generally ineffective use of audio and visual elements to sustain the involvement of the audience. It will demonstrate the unsatisfactory application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes/assessment section of the programme specification.</p> <p>Essay Grading Criteria</p>

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
		Awarded when the candidate demonstrates an unsatisfactory application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the Learning Outcomes of the module.
10-29%	Bad fail	Practice Grading Criteria Represents a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes. Essay Grading Criteria Awarded when the assessed work demonstrates a significant overall failure to achieve the Learning Outcomes, and where there is no evidence of recognition of the question nor of how it might be responded to.
1-9%	Very bad fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes.
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	Non submission or plagiarised assessment.

How the programme is structured

Students who successfully complete modules to the value of 60 CATS may exit the programme with the award of the PGCert in Scriptwriting. The PGCert is awarded without grade.

Attendance is mandatory for all sessions of all compulsory and selected option modules.

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Scriptwriting	MC71067A	90	7	Compulsory	1,2&3
Reflection Essay	MC71071B	15	7	Compulsory	1
Optional modules to the value of 75 credits from an approved list in Media, Communications and Cultural Studies	Various	75	7	Optional	1 or 2

Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in a number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally.

All students are allocated a Personal Tutor (one in each department for joint programmes) who has overall responsibility for their individual progress and welfare. Personal Tutors meet with their student at least twice a year either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically. The first meeting normally takes place within the first few weeks of the autumn term. Personal Tutors are also available to students throughout the year of study. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This provides an opportunity for progress, attendance and assessment marks to be reviewed and an informed discussion to take place about how to strengthen individual learning and success. All students are also allocated a Senior Tutor to enable them to speak to an experienced academic member of staff about any issues which are negatively impacting their academic study and which are beyond the normal scope of issues handled by Programme Convenors and Personal Tutors.

Students are provided with information about learning resources, the [Library](#) and information available on [Learn.gold \(VLE\)](#) so that they have access to department/programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance.

Taught sessions and lectures provide overviews of themes, which students are encouraged to complement with intensive reading for presentation and discussion with peers at seminars. Assessments build on lectures and seminars so students are expected to attend all taught sessions to build knowledge and their own understanding of their chosen discipline.

All assessed work is accompanied by some form of feedback to ensure that students' work is on the right track. It may come in a variety of forms ranging from written comments on a marked essay to oral and written feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops.

Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is provided on the [Goldsmiths website](#) and for new students through new starter information and induction/Welcome Week. Any support recommendations that are made are agreed with the student and communicated to the department so that adjustments to learning and teaching

are able to be implemented at a department level and students can be reassured that arrangements are in place. Opportunities are provided for students to review their support arrangements should their circumstances change. The [Disability](#) and [Wellbeing](#) Services maintain caseloads of students and provide on-going support.

The [Careers Service](#) provides central support for skills enhancement, running [The Gold Award](#) scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the Higher Education Achievement Report ([HEAR](#)).

The [Academic Skills Centre](#) works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision for students throughout the year.

Links with employers, placement opportunities and career prospects

While no programme can guarantee a job afterwards, the structure of the MA Script Writing programme is designed to maximise employment opportunities. In addition to the industry standards achieved with the module content, there are numerous opportunities for students to make some of the contacts necessary for employment afterwards. The Visiting Tutors teaching on the programme are currently working in the industry. There are also frequent Masterclasses and talks from visiting speakers from industry with leading industry professionals, and a mentor programme where students are supported in finding a suitable industry mentor. As the programme is well established, bringing former students back to talk about their professional work is a regular part of the programme. Very often, graduates from the programme keep in touch with each other, providing support and encouragement. Also there are several instances where graduates have started up their own companies, with considerable success. There are also various schemes such as the BBC Writers Room and other networking opportunities organised Skillset (for whom this programme is one of the ten accredited script writing modules in the country) that help to increase student's employment prospects.

The requirements of a Goldsmiths degree

All taught postgraduate degrees have a minimum total value of 180 credits and involve one calendar year of full-time study. Some programmes may extend over more than one calendar year and, when this is the case, they have a higher total credit value. Programmes are composed of individual modules, each of which has its own credit value. Part-time students normally take modules to the value of 90 credits each year. If a programme has a part-time pathway, the structure will be set out in the section "How the programme is

structured” above. Normally, all modules are at level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

More detailed information about the structure and requirements of a Goldsmiths degree is provided in the [Goldsmiths Qualifications and Credit Framework](#).

Modules

Modules are defined as:

- “Optional” – which can be chosen from a group of modules
- “Compulsory” – which must be taken as part of the degree

Progression

Some programmes may require students to pass specific modules prior to completion of the dissertation/major project (or equivalent). Additionally, where a programme of study extends beyond one calendar year, students may be required to pass specific modules in their first year of study before progressing to the second year. Where this is the case, these requirements will be set out in this Programme Specification.

Award of the degree

In order to graduate, students must successfully complete all modules specified for the programme, as set out within the section “How the programme is structured” above.

Classification

Final degree classification is calculated on the basis of a student’s mean average mark (based on credit value) across all modules on the programme.

Masters degrees are awarded with the following classifications:

Distinction – 70%+

Merit – 60-69%

Pass – 50-59%

More detail on the [calculation of the final classification](#) is on our website.

Interim exit awards

Some programmes incorporate interim exit points of Postgraduate Certificate and/or Postgraduate Diploma, which may be awarded on the successful completion of modules to the minimum value of 60 credits or 120 credits respectively. The awards are made without classification.

When these awards are incorporated within the programme, the relevant learning outcomes and module requirements will be set out within the “What you will be expected to achieve” section above.

The above information is intended as a guide, with more detailed information available in the [Goldsmiths Academic Manual](#).

Programme-specific rules and facts

General programme costs

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

Specific programme costs

Not applicable.

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 are formally approved against national standards and are monitored throughout the year, such as in departmental committees, a variety of student feedback mechanisms and through the completion of module evaluation questionnaires. Every programme has at least one External Examiner who reviews comments annually on the standards of awards and student achievement. External Examiner(s) attend Boards of Examiners meetings and submit an annual written report.

Modules, programmes and/or departments are also subject to annual and periodic review internally, as well as periodic external scrutiny.

Quality assurance processes aim to ensure Goldsmiths' academic provision remains 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 these procedures are published on the [Quality Office web pages](#).