

Programme Specification

BA English Literature

For students entering Part 1 in September 2026

UCAS Code: Q300

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This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	3 years
Length of Programme with placement/year abroad	BA English Literature with Placement Experience - 4 years (internal transfer only) BA English Literature with Year Abroad - 4 years (internal transfer only)
Accreditation	N/A
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	English

Programme information and content

This programme aims to support you as you deepen and broaden your understanding of literary works written in different places, across a range of historical periods. You will study some texts in familiar formats, and some in new and less well-known genres.

You will sharpen your expertise in close reading and interpretation, mastering appropriate methods for critical analysis. You will develop your own writing skills in regular assessment exercises, and through reflection on constructive feedback.

You will have opportunities in each year of your degree to explore the historical range of literature written in English, from the Middle Ages to the present. In Part 1 you will survey the major literary forms (poetry, prose fiction and drama). In Part 2 your investigations of literary themes, theories and historical periods will have a more comprehensive focus, and involve more detailed enquiry. In Part 3 you will pursue specialised and independent study that reflects your own interests, choosing from a wide range of research-based modules. You will join the debates that shape our subject. In all your modules, you will be supported in finding the most appropriate theoretical perspectives for the texts you study.

As a graduate in English Literature from the University of Reading you will have acquired skills in close reading, interpretative analysis, and critical argumentation. You will be practiced at articulating ideas clearly, accurately, and persuasively. These skills will allow you to engage with confidence in professional and public discourse. In your personal and working life they will enable you to look beyond immediate tasks and problems to wider social, cultural, civic, and global contexts. You will also enter the job market with highly developed research and communication skills. You will have the critical and cultural

awareness necessary for working in areas such as the public sector and the media. You will have encountered some literary works that will stay in your memory and enrich your life for a long time after you leave us.	
Part 1:	Part 1 of our programme will introduce you to debates about approaches to the study of literature, through critical and research exercises and close study of selected texts from a number of different periods.
Part 2:	Part 2 will give you greater breadth of coverage, allowing you to study texts from different historical periods and generic traditions.
Placement/Study abroad year:	Professional Placement Year and Study Abroad opportunities are available between Parts 2 and 3.
Part 3:	In Part 3 you will undertake more specialised and independent literary study, choosing your modules from a wide range of options. The dissertation module develops your skills in research, planning and writing.

Programme Learning Outcomes - BA English Literature	
During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:	
	Learning outcomes
1	To demonstrate broad, deep, and coherent knowledge of English literature in its principal modes and genres: across poetry, prose, and drama; covering a range of historical periods; and comprehending the regional variety and global reach of the English language
2	To apply discipline-specific practices of close reading, interpretative analysis and critical argument
3	To distinguish and evaluate different research methods, themes, and theoretical debates in current literary studies
4	To undertake autonomous learning, enquiry and research within the discipline of English literature, applying your mastery of relevant knowledge, skills and methods.
5	To discuss and appraise published research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, within the field of English literature
6	To respond creatively and imaginatively to essay questions and research tasks, for the purpose of devising and sustaining arguments, and of reaching decisive judgments
7	To initiate, devise, compose and conclude critical projects of different scales: from learning journals, presentations, reports and coursework essays, to extended essays and dissertations

8	To recognize what and how you have learnt, through self-reflection and through constructive dialogue with other people
9	To articulate your own and other people's ideas concisely, accurately, and clearly
10	To make sound judgments on complex and culturally sensitive issues, and communicate them in an appropriate and effective manner
11	To demonstrate personal commitment, intercultural competence, and international engagement in public discourse
12	To value personal, social, civic, and global perspectives, looking beyond any immediate task or question to its wider contexts.

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

In addition to the learning outcomes stated above if you are on a placement or study abroad programme you will have the opportunity to develop the following learning outcome:

Additional Learning outcomes	
Study Abroad	
By the end of the Study Abroad Programme, students will have adapted to international study contexts in order to achieve the required academic outcomes determined by the host institution.	
Placement	
By the end of the Placement Year Programme, students will have explored and developed their professional experience, skills and knowledge, contributing significantly towards their continuous learning and career prospects as graduates.	

Module information

Each part comprises 120 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Part 1 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
EN1IDR	Introduction to Drama	20	4
EN1PE	Poetry in English	20	4
EN1PWI	Prose: Writing Identities	20	4
EN1TPW	Theories and Practice of Writing	20	4

The remaining 40 credits will be made up from optional modules available from the Department of English Literature. Up to 20 credits of optional modules may be substituted for modules available from an approved list.

Part 2 Modules:

Students must take TWO modules from a list of up to 4 modules covering historical periods before 1900, as specified by the department.

The remaining credits will be made up from optional modules available from the Department of English Literature.

Up to 20 credits of optional modules may be substituted for modules available from an approved list.

Modules during a placement year or study year (if applicable):

Students on one of the 4-year programmes will take one 120 credit module in either Work Experience or Study Abroad. Students may be permitted to undertake a placement year or a study abroad year between Part 2 and Part 3 of the programme. In such cases students will transfer to a 4-year programme. The placement or study abroad year should not normally be shorter than nine months full-time.

If you take a year-long placement or study abroad, Part 3 as described below may be subject to variation.

Part 3 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
EN3DIS	Dissertation	40	6

The remaining credits must be selected from the optional modules available in the Department of English Literature. Up to 20 credits of optional modules may be substituted for modules available from an approved list.

Placement opportunities

Placements:

You may be provided with the opportunity to undertake a credit-bearing placement as part of your Programme. This will form all or part of an optional module. You will be required to find and secure a placement opportunity, with the support of the University

Study Abroad:

You may be provided with the opportunity to undertake a Study Abroad placement during your Programme. This is subject to you meeting academic conditions detailed in the Programme Handbook, including obtaining the relevant permissions from your School, and

the availability of a suitable Study Abroad placement. If you undertake a Study Abroad placement, further arrangements will be discussed and agreed with you.

Optional modules:

The optional modules available can vary from year to year. An indicative list of the range of optional modules for your programme can be found online in the Course Catalogue. Details of optional modules for each part, including any additional costs associated with the optional modules, will be made available to you prior to the beginning of the Part in which they are to be taken and you will be given an opportunity to express interest in the optional modules that you would like to take. Entry to optional modules will be at the discretion of the University and subject to availability and may be subject to pre-requisites, such as completion of another module. Although the University tries to ensure you are able to take the optional modules in which you have expressed interest this cannot be guaranteed.

Teaching and learning delivery:

You will begin your degree in English with some familiar concepts (we will look at poetry, prose fiction and drama), but we will consider ways of reading and interpretation of texts that may be new to you. You will also build your writing skills, for academic, and non-academic purposes, in the year-long Writing module. This will include opportunities to work with Creative Writing. Your learning experience will involve a mix of lectures, asynchronous recorded content and small-group seminar discussion.

In Part 2 you will choose modules designed to study literary texts in context, either in terms of history, place or culture. There is a greater emphasis on small-group discussion at Part 2, but material to help you familiarise yourself with the cultural and historical context of our set texts will be provided in live lectures and in asynchronous recorded content.

In Part 3 you will choose the modules that best reflect your interests as a critic and a writer. You will be responsible for researching the texts yourself, and your learning will mostly consist of small-group discussion. You will have the opportunity to do a larger piece of self-directed research in the dissertation module,

Across your three years of study, you will be assessed by traditional coursework essays, but you may also be asked to do assessed presentations, develop learning journals, write Critical/Creative work, and undertake research projects. Detailed guidance will be given for assessment methods, and you will be given module-specific marking criteria for each module

Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology.

The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for your programme will depend upon your module combination. In addition, you will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which give some flexibility for you to choose when to complete them. You will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module

description.

Accreditation details

N/A

Assessment

The programme will be assessed through a combination of written examinations, coursework (including class tests) and oral examinations. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Progression

Part 1

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 1, a student will normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain an overall weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1;
- (ii) Obtain a mark of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits taken in Part 1; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in modules amounting to 120 credits. (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree.)

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 1 qualifies a student for a Certificate of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Students are able to transfer from a Joint or Major/Minor Honours programme to a Single Honours programme in one of their joint subject areas at the end of Part 1, subject to:

- Meeting the University Threshold Standard at the end of Part 1; and
- Achieving marks of at least 40% in at least 40 credits of modules (e.g., 2 x 20 credit modules) in the subject to which they wish to transfer; and
- Meeting any programme-specific progression rules for the Part 1 Single Honours Programme to which they wish to transfer.

NB Students taking a Major/Minor programme may only transfer to a Single Honours programme in the Major subject and must meet the above requirements.

Students should seek advice about the titles of programmes they may be eligible to transfer to.

Students who transfer from a Joint or Major/Minor Honours programme to a Single Honours programme may not have taken all of the Part 1 modules listed in the Single Honours Programme Specification. The modules which they have taken will be shown on their Diploma Supplement.

Part 2

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 2, a student shall normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain a weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (ii) Obtain marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to at least 80 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to at least 120 credits. (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree.)

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 2 qualifies a student for a Diploma of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Professional/placement year

Students are required to pass the professional placement year/study abroad year in order to progress on the programme which incorporates the professional placement year/study abroad year. Students who fail the professional placement year/study abroad year transfer to the non-placement year version of the programme.

Classification

Bachelors' degrees

The University's honours classification scheme is based on the following:

Mark Interpretation

70% - 100% First class

60% - 69% Upper Second class

50% - 59% Lower Second class

40% - 49% Third class

35% - 39% Below Honours Standard

0% - 34% Fail

The weighting of the Parts/Years in the calculation of the degree classification is:

Three year programmes:

Part 2: one-third

Part 3: two-thirds

Four year programmes, including study abroad

Part 2: one-third

Study abroad: Year abroad not included in the classification

Part 3: two-thirds

Details of the classification method is given in detail in the Assessment Handbook under:

- Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's), or
- Section 18: Awards (Integrated Master's programmes). Students who do not progress to Part 4 of the Integrated Master's will normally be subject to the method detailed under Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's)

Please note that there may be a specific version of the above for your year of entry.

Additional costs of the programme

During your programme of study you will incur some additional costs.

A range of resources to support your curriculum, including textbooks and electronic resources, are available through the library, but you will need to purchase some materials for private study. We recommend that you budget between £150-200 per year for purchasing books. Some books may be available second-hand, which will reduce costs. Reading lists and module-specific costs are listed on the individual module descriptions. Some optional modules may involve additional costs for fieldtrips or travel to work placements. You will be advised of these costs before you enrol on the module.

If you take part in Study Abroad you should expect to pay for services which you would normally expect to pay for at Reading e.g. housing, food, travel, social activities, etc. Additional costs will vary depending on the host institution and location. Please see the Study Abroad website for further details.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2025.

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

BA English Literature for students entering Part 1 in session 2026/27

4 July 2025

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