MA Literature, Culture and Identity

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose:

Course management, monitoring and quality assurance.

Secondary Purpose:

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

Disclaimer:

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification and believes it to be correct. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification but reserve the right to change the content, timetabling and administration of the course whilst maintaining equivalent academic standards and quality.

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Contents

Programme Specification

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1. Named Awards

MA Literature, Culture and Identity

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

C2159F/P

To view units and course structures please visit www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch and enter the 'C' code above to find the correct course.

3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

4. Teaching Institution

University of Portsmouth

5. Accrediting Body

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

Not Applicable

7. Document Control Information

Version: August 2016

8. Effective Session

2016-17

9. Author

Dr Ben Davies

10. Faculty

Humanities and Social Science.

11. Department

Social Historical and Literary Studies.

12. Educational Aims

- To develop students' advanced skills of literary and theory analysis.
- Preparation for and/or development of skills required for further postgraduate study.
- To develop the ability to identify, interrogate and build a knowledge of critical and literary theory within the field of twentieth and twenty-first century literature in relation to the concept of identity.

  Enhancement of lifelong learning skills and personal development so as to be able to work with self-direction, originality and flexibility in the context of changing labour markets.

13. Reference Points

- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- The scholarship and research expertise of academic members of staff.
- QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education.
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

14. Learning Outcomes

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

1 Key current methodological issues in the literary and cultural study of the concept of identity in relation to self and other, race, gender and sexuality;
2 Critical perspectives on the nature of the research process;
3 Modes of textual and other critical and research analysis;
4 Research skills in the fields of IT, bibliographic and literature surveys and personal development;
5 The conceptualisation and implementation of research plans;
6 Specialist subject knowledge in a variety of areas in twentieth and twenty-first century literature through project-work, dissertation.

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Lectures, seminars, tutorial groups, group work, individual presentations, mini projects, dissertation supervision will provide course members with skills, knowledge and understanding of the literature, perspectives and approaches in all the identified learning outcomes in section 14.

Assessment

A mix of assessments will include essays, individual presentations, library tasks, conference projects and dissertations to achieve assessment of section 14.

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:

1 Evaluate the application of critical approaches (in terms of theory and practice) to areas of research;
2 Analyse and critically evaluate different research methodologies;
3 Demonstrate general and subject specific research and information retrieval skills;
4 Collate, synthesise and analyse materials from a variety of sources using a range of methodologies;
5 Offer original applications of methodological knowledge to research problems and conclusions.

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

A variety of strategies including group discussions and tutorials will be utilised to encourage ongoing analysis and reflection on the course content, competing interpretations and experiences enabling B1 –B5 to be achieved.

Assessment

B1 – B5 will be assessed through essays, presentations and dissertation designed to integrate theory with practice.

C. Practical Skills, able to:

1 Use advanced critical skills in close reading and analysis of texts;
2 Select appropriate research methodologies;
3 Use bibliographical skills appropriate to the discipline, including accurate and consistent use of scholarly conventions of presentation;

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Cognitive skills will be developed through a range of teaching methods

C1 – C3 will be assessed through essays, presentations and dissertation designed to integrate theory with practice.

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to:

1. Identify, assess and apply appropriate information from a range of sources;
2. Demonstrate advanced literacy and oral and written communication skills, including the ability to present a rhetorically effective, coherent, well-supported, and sustained argument
3. Demonstrate self-management, initiative and personal responsibility in designing and conducting significant research projects with elements of originality.
4. Structure and communicate complex ideas effectively.
5. Use information technology to collect and analyse information.
6. Work independently.
7. Work within a group and recognise the value of other contributions.
8. Develop interpersonal skills.

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Coursework assignments will expect students to identify and assess appropriate materials from a range of sources to evaluate their utility, accuracy and currency and to use them to communicate effectively in a wide range of written and discursive formats. All assignments must be word processed and students are expected to seek academic and technical sources of help and advice from a number of sources at different stages of the programme. All students are required to take personal responsibility for their learning throughout and to plan and deliver assignments within a framework of paced-study and appropriate deadlines.

Assessment

Assessment will be through the course work requirements for each unit, including mini projects, e.g. library tasks and conference skills. The system of deadlines and associated penalties for late submission ensures student planning of time and academic tasks and encourages personal responsibility for own learning.

15. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

The programme is offered in two modes – full time over one calendar year or part time over two calendar years.

The degree is based on the University's Masters calibration of 180 M level credits with units consisting of combinations of 30 and 60 credits. Each credit is equivalent to 10 hours of student learning.

Exit awards will follow the university regulations (which must be consulted for a full description)
    Master of Arts: Literature, Culture and Identity requires the accumulation of 180 credits
    Postgraduate Diploma: Literature, Culture and Identity requires 120 credits
    Postgraduate Certificate: Literature, Culture and Identity requires 60 credits

The structure of the degree consists of:

Core Units
Core Optional Units
Optional Units
Dissertation Unit

16. Employability Statement

Opportunities exist via Purple Door for development of career opportunities and work placements. Personal development and career planning is provided within the teaching team of the programme.

Employability skills are specifically addressed by the English Research Skills unit for which the students are guided towards developing advanced skills in the self-management of their research, bibliographic research skills, participating in the conventions of academic debate through the production of academic papers suitable for presenting at professional conferences. Students will also gain experience in introducing and guiding debate in a group situation while carrying out oral presentations during the core units, followed by a question and answer session. Students will also gain simulated work experience during the English Research Skills unit during which the group create a conference Call for Papers and write a paper suitable for presentation at a conference, presenting it to their peers and members of the teaching staff. During the core units they also gain experience of the mechanisms of teaching or running meetings by giving presentations, question and answer sessions and organising and presenting research.

17. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader.
- Extensive induction programme introduces the students to the University and their course
- Each student is provided with a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance.
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc.
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK).
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC).
- Excellent library facilities.
- The University of Portsmouth has consistently been awarded an excellent rating for student support and guidance in a number of Quality Assurance Agency inspections.
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations etc.
- Feedback is provided for all assessments.
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all awards.

18. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

Normally a first degree (2:1) in a relevant subject or, exceptionally, a strong profile of relevant professional experience and/or training and demonstration of academic ability to achieve a post graduate level.

For those applicants where English is not their first language, IELTS 6.5, in all bands for campus-based students. A formal exemption process is in place at Admissions stage for relevant cases.

B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

19. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.

- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies.
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme.
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports.
- Periodic Programme Review.
- Student Representatives and Student/Staff Consultative Committees.
- National Student Survey.
- Staff Performance and Development Review.
- Peer Review and Development Framework.
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee.

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery.
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course.
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course.
- Head of Department.
- Associate Dean (Academic).
- Associate Dean (Students).
- Quality Assurance Committee.
- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners.

C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback

- Student Representation on Board of Studies.
- Student Staff Consultative Committees.
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires.
- University participates in external student surveys, eg National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and International Student Barometer (ISB).

D. Staff Development Priorities

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance.
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs.
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes..
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership.
- Academic staff undertake initial and continuing professional development within the Academic Professional Excellence Framework (APEX) programme which is aligned with the Higher Education Academy (HEA)'s UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)
- Support Staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages.

20. Assessment Strategy

Assessment of learning outcomes is progressively achieved through a range of formal assessment artefacts including academic essays, presentations, literature reviews, research proposals and final dissertation. Further, the use of open learning materials and/or structured readings and other learning media, including the use of Virtual Learning Environment tool, will encourage ongoing analysis and reflection on course content, competing interpretations and experiences. Assessment seeks to encourage and prompt critical engagement and original thinking with course materials, completing interpretations and experiences, and prompt the development of a broad range of intellectual, cognitive and practice skills.

21. Assessment Regulations

Standard university rules apply (see [Assessment and Regulations](#)).

22. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards;
- approve unit assessment strategy;
- sample assessment artefacts;
- present report to Unit Assessment Boards.

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:

- oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards;
- scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment;
- ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

23. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

None

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

The programme is assessed within the University's programme of regular review including the ASQR and the PDSQR. English Literature Masters, Single and Combined Honours underwent an External Periodic Review on February 19th 2013.

The Review confirmed the 'Fitness of Purpose' of The English Literature curriculum and the effectiveness of its annual monitoring and review processes. It identified the following as being particular strengths of the English Literature Provision:

- The programme offers a range of exciting and distinctive units based on staff expertise;
- Employability skills are widely embedded throughout the curriculum;
- Lecturers are accessible and offer a supportive learning environment;
- Students are offered a wide range of online resources;
- There is flexibility within the curriculum structure for students to choose their own specialist pathway through the degree (Outcome Report, Feb 2013).

C. Quality Assurance Agency

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (*for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015](#)*[1]).
[1] www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf

D. Others

None

24. Other Sources of Information

Other sources of information may be found in

- Course Approval Document.
- Student Handbook.
- University of Portsmouth Curricula Framework.

- University of Portsmouth Postgraduate Prospectus.
- Assessment Regulations.

University of Portsmouth (http://www.port.ac.uk/) and (http://www.port.ac.uk/departments/academic/sshls/) website.