

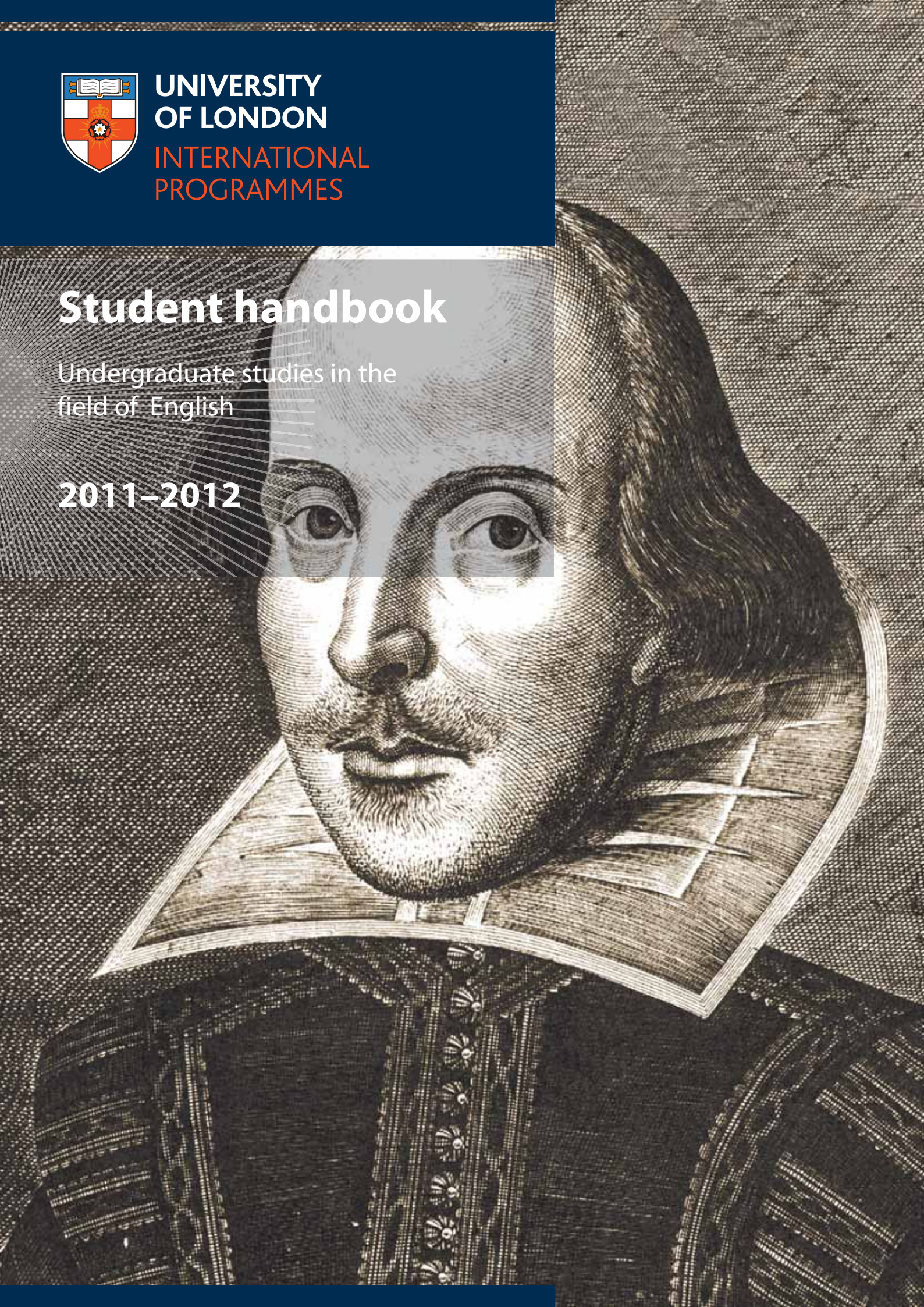


**UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON**  
INTERNATIONAL  
PROGRAMMES

# Student handbook

Undergraduate studies in the  
field of English

**2011–2012**



## Statement

The University of London and its staff cannot accept legal responsibility for the information which this document contains or the use to which this information is subsequently put. Although every step is taken to ensure that the information is as accurate as possible, it is understood that this material is supplied on the basis that there is no legal responsibility for these materials or resulting from the use to which these can or may be put.

Note: the telephone and fax numbers given in this *handbook* for addresses outside the United Kingdom are those to be used if you are in that country. If you are telephoning or faxing from another country, we suggest you contact your local telecommunications provider for details of the country code and area code that you should use.

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# Welcome to your 2011–2012 study year as an International Programmes student

This **Programme section** provides academic guidance along with practical information and advice that is specific to your studies as an English student. We hope that we have covered everything that you need to know during your studies but if you require any additional information or support, please do not hesitate to contact a member of our staff. Full contact details are provided on page 9 of this *handbook*. If you would like to suggest any additional information which you think should be included, please complete and return the comment form at the end of this *handbook*.

For practical information that applies to all of the programmes offered through the International Programmes, such as how to pay your fees, please refer to the **General section** in the second half of this *handbook*.

You will be notified directly of any changes likely to affect your study programme but you may also find it helpful to check our website [www.londoninternational.ac.uk](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk), which is regularly updated with the latest news.



Goldsmiths College

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# A message for Diploma in English and Certificate of Higher Education in English students

The Department of English and  
Comparative Literature  
Goldsmiths  
University of London  
Lewisham Way  
New Cross  
London SE14 6NW  
United Kingdom

Dear Student

Welcome to the Diploma in English or the Certificate of Higher Education in English for University of London, International Programmes students.

Please note that to help prepare you for your studies, you have been sent the *handbook* and the subject guides which refer to Diploma, Certificate and BA English for International Programmes students. Please don't feel confused by this – it's not a mistake!

There are four main reasons why we have not prepared a separate *handbook* and subject guides for students. Firstly, most of the material in the *handbook* on study techniques and assessment, for example, applies to Diploma and Certificate students

as well as BA students embarking on the first stage of their degree programme. Secondly, the syllabuses and assessment procedures for each of the courses of the Diploma and Certificate are identical to those of the Foundation courses which BA students undertake as the first step towards their degree. Thirdly, the standards required of Diploma and Certificate students are identical to those required of BA students taking Foundation courses. Fourthly, while the Diploma and Certificate have been designed as self-contained programmes of study, we know that many of you may wish to use them to gain entry at a later date to the BA programme (successful completion of the Diploma or Certificate gains credit for the Foundation courses of the BA degree in English for International Programmes students). Thus it is useful to combine information for these programmes together.

In practice, you will find it very easy to adapt the BA *handbook* and subject guides for the BA Foundation courses to your own course of study as a Diploma or Certificate student. Please note, however, that the Regulations are slightly different from the



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Regulations for the BA degree in English for International Programmes students (which covers the entire programme of the degree) and that you must make sure that your programme of study as a Diploma or Certificate student conforms in all respects to what is required in the Regulations. What will most concern you in the *handbook* is all the material relating to the Foundation courses and study advice. You will not, immediately at any rate, be concerned with the information on the Advanced courses.

You might like to note that the Regulations allow you to complete your Diploma or Certificate in one year. However, this is quite a gruelling task and should, perhaps, only be attempted if you register with an independent teaching institution for tuition and support, and if you are studying full time. The majority of students take two years to complete their studies.

If you have questions about the Diploma or Certificate which concern Regulations, examination timetables, registration or any other matters of an administrative nature, please contact the relevant departments of the International Programmes (see Contacts pages). Matters of an academic nature (course content, for example) are covered in some depth in the subject guides. If, having carefully read these, you still have any queries, please feel free to write to me at the address listed at the head of this message. If the matter is pressing, you can:

telephone me: +44 (0)20 7717 2990

fax me: +44 (0)20 7919 7453

or email me: s.barnsley@gold.ac.uk

Before contacting me by phone, fax or email, please ensure that your queries have not already been answered in the materials supplied to you by the International Programmes. You will appreciate that with several hundred students engaged in this programme, I cannot go over ground that has already been covered in the Regulations, the *handbook* or individual subject guides.

I hope that you will find the experience of studying both rewarding and stimulating and that you will enjoy the Diploma and Certificate programmes we have constructed for you.

With best wishes

Dr Sarah Barnsley  
**Programme Director**

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# A message for Diploma of Higher Education in English or BA English students

The Department of English and  
Comparative Literature  
Goldsmiths  
University of London  
Lewisham Way  
New Cross  
London SE14 6NW  
United Kingdom

I hope that you will find the experience of studying both rewarding and stimulating and that you will enjoy the degree programme we have constructed for you.

With best wishes

Dr Sarah Barnsley

**Programme Director**

Dear Student

Welcome to the Diploma of Higher Education or BA degree in English for International Programmes students of the University of London.

If you have questions about the degree or diploma which concern examinations or matters of registration, please contact the relevant departments at the International Programmes (see Contacts pages).

Matters of an academic nature are covered in some depth in the subject guides with which you have been provided. If, having carefully read these, you still have queries, you can write to me at Goldsmiths. If the matter is pressing, you can:

phone me: +44 (0)20 7717 2990

fax me: +44 (0)20 7919 7453

or email me: [s.barnsley@gold.ac.uk](mailto:s.barnsley@gold.ac.uk)

Before contacting me by phone, fax or email, please ensure that your queries have not already been answered in the materials supplied to you by the International Programmes. You will appreciate that with several hundred students engaged in this programme, I cannot go over ground that has already been covered in the Regulations, the *handbook* or individual subject guides.

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# The University, University of London International Programmes and Goldsmiths

## The University of London: a centre of excellence

The University of London, which was established in 1836, is one of the oldest and largest universities in the United Kingdom. It is a federation of 19 colleges and 12 institutes. Some colleges are specialised (such as the School of Oriental and African Studies and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine), while others are multi-faculty (such as University College London and Queen Mary, University of London). Specialist institutes include the Institute of Commonwealth Studies.

## University of London International Programmes

In 1858, Queen Victoria signed the University's fourth charter which permitted the University's degrees to be accessible to students who did not want or could not come to London to study. This groundbreaking initiative is one of the earliest examples of a university making its degrees accessible to students and established what has now become known as the University of London International Programmes.

International Programmes students register for a range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and our students, who come from over 190 different countries, have an age range of between 18 years old to over 70 years old. Some join the International Programmes immediately after leaving school, while others may have been working for a number of years and need a qualification in order to improve their prospects. Others

purely seek the challenge of studying a new subject at degree level. In many countries graduates of the International Programmes occupy senior positions in government, commerce and industry. The value of a University of London degree is well recognised throughout the world.

## Our new name

In August 2010, we changed our name from the External System to the University of London International Programmes to better describe ourselves in the twenty-first century. This change allows greater clarity and inclusiveness and we believe it will help us to reach many more students like you in the future.

One critical thing has not changed – we continue to offer worldwide access to a university education of consistently high standard. We're very proud of our (and your) reputation and will continue to build on everything the External System stood for and achieved.

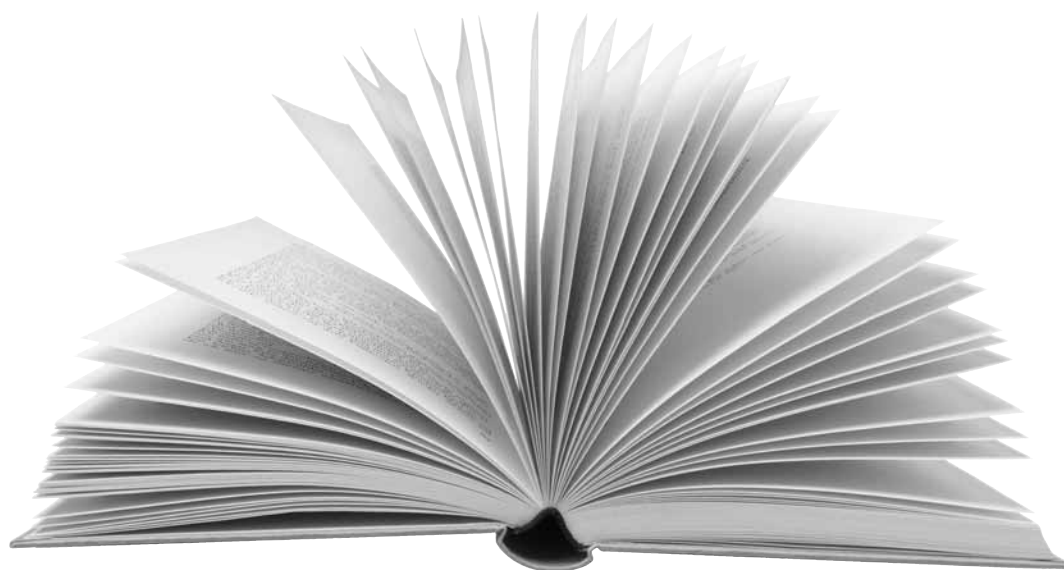
Our name may have changed, but the people, values, reputation and history remain exactly the same.

## Lead College – Goldsmiths

Goldsmiths was founded in 1891, in south-east London, by the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, and has been part of the University of London since 1904. It has a strong commitment to the in-service training of teachers, and community and social workers, as well as a long tradition of providing adult and continuing education, now expanding across the College into new areas of specialist vocational and post-experience work.

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The Goldsmiths Department of English and Comparative Literature has a thriving research environment embracing traditional and new approaches to English studies, and covering a wide range of interests in British, American and Irish literatures since the sixteenth century. The Department has particular research strengths in Renaissance, eighteenth-century, postcolonial and twentieth/ twenty-first century literature and criticism. Members of staff publish widely and participate in the editing of such journals as *Critical Quarterly*, *The Scriblerian* and *Women: A Cultural Review*.



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# New developments in 2011

## Online services

The University of London International Programmes is undergoing a major Business Transformation Process to enhance the services we provide to students. As part of this, we will be offering you more facilities online over the coming years.

As well as being able to contact us via the details listed on the following pages, you will soon be able to do the following activities online:

- register
- select study courses/modules
- pay fees
- inform us of a change of address
- apply for special examination arrangements
- view your personal records, including your examination results
- enter for examinations.

In the future, we will also be aiming to offer additional services online.

We will be contacting you about these services as they are rolled out, so look out for email alerts from us telling you how to access these new facilities.

## New codes

Note that course/module codes are new from the 2011–2012 academic year and replace any previous year's examination numbers. This change does not affect the syllabus or content of the course/module. The new code for each course/module is shown next to the course title in Annex A and Annex B of the Programme Specification and Detailed Regulations. For a table showing how old examination numbers are replaced by new course/module codes, see the University of London International Programmes website:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/new\\_codes](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/new_codes)

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# Contacts

If you have a query, the following list provides contact details for the members of staff who will be able to help. Whenever you contact a member of staff, it is important that you remember to give your full name, student number and the programme on which you are studying. This will help the member of staff locate your student record and deal with your query as quickly as possible.

## Emails

Hundreds of emails reach us every day from International Programmes students all over the world. This huge (and growing) volume of email has a considerable impact on our work. Because of this, you will find that some staff and offices are using an 'automated response' message, particularly at busy times.

To help us deal with email enquiries efficiently and without undue delay, please observe the following etiquette when sending your message:

- Be organised – please ensure you send the message to the correct person or office (see 'Staff at the International Programmes').
- Be considerate – please do not copy the message to other people or other offices.
- Have patience – allow seven days for a personal response to be made to your message **before** making a further enquiry.
- Be responsible – if re-sending a message or enquiring about an earlier message, always say that this is a repeat enquiry and give the date when your original message was sent.

When sending an email, please make sure that you include your student record number and a brief description of your query in the email subject. For example: 'SRN 012345678 – Change of address'.

## Main address

The postal address for all staff (unless otherwise given) is:

University of London  
International Programmes  
Stewart House  
32 Russell Square  
London WC1B 5DN  
United Kingdom

## BA/Dip English academic queries

If you have queries of an academic nature, you can contact the Programme Director. Programme Directors cannot engage in active regular advice or tuition, and if you are studying in an independent teaching institution you should first consult your course tutor.

The Programme Director can be contacted as follows:

Dr Sarah Barnsley  
Department of English and  
Comparative Literature  
Goldsmiths  
University of London  
Lewisham Way  
New Cross  
London SE14 6NW  
United Kingdom

## Staff at the International Programmes

Queries about despatch of materials:	<b>Registration and Learning Resources Office</b> Tel: +44 (0)20 7862 8322 Fax: +44 (0)20 7862 8329 Email: enrolments@london.ac.uk
Queries about requests for transcripts:	<b>Transcripts Office</b> Tel: +44 (0) 20 7862 8549 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7862 8300 Email: transcripts@london.ac.uk Website: <a href="http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/transcripts">www.londoninternational.ac.uk/transcripts</a>
Queries about degree and diploma certificates:	<b>Diploma Production Office</b> Tel: +44 (0) 20 7862 8301 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7862 8287 Email: diploma.enquiries@london.ac.uk
Applications for special examination arrangements and considerations or if you need your study materials to be provided in a particular format:	<b>Special Needs Coordinator</b> Corporate Performance and Quality Tel: +44 (0) 20 7664 4824 Email: specialneeds@london.ac.uk
Should you be concerned that an administrative error may have been made in the calculation of your examination results:	<b>Administrative recheck of results</b> Corporate Performance and Quality Email: uolia.recheck@london.ac.uk Website: <a href="http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams/admin_recheck">www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams/admin_recheck</a>
To notify us if you change your name or address, or to request a certificate of registration:	<b>Registration and Learning Resources Office</b> Tel: +44 (0) 20 7862 8322 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7862 8329 Email: enrolments@london.ac.uk
Queries about transfer of registration to another degree or diploma in the International Programmes:	<b>Registration and Learning Resources Office</b> Tel: +44 (0) 20 7862 8322 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7862 8329 Email: enrolments@london.ac.uk

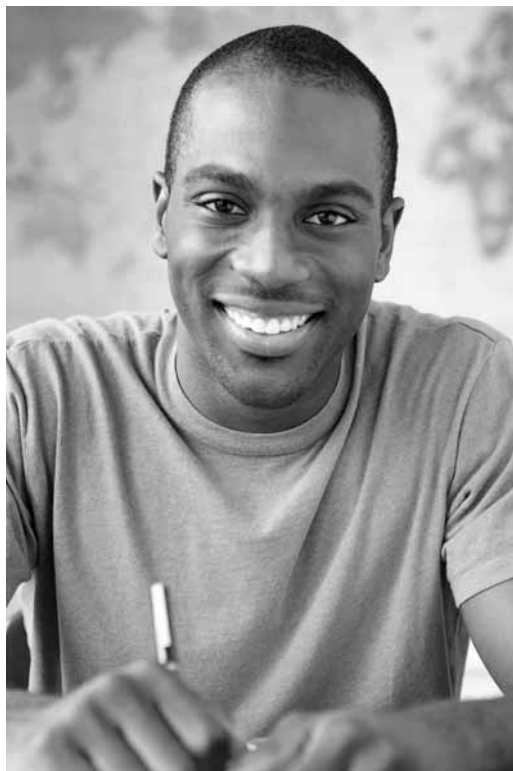
Programme Enquiries may be able to help you with questions arising from your studies that are not directly academic or concerned with admissions, accreditation of prior learning or examinations:	<b>Programme Enquiries</b> The Information Centre Tel: +44 (0) 20 7862 8361/8397 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7862 8358 Email: programme.enquiries@london.ac.uk
Queries about accreditation of prior learning:	<b>Undergraduate Admissions Office</b> Tel: +44 (0) 20 7862 8045 Email: admissions@london.ac.uk
Queries about examination entry and notification of results:	<b>Student Assessment Office (English)</b> Tel: +44 (0) 20 7862 8353 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7862 8349 Email: external.exams@london.ac.uk
Examination entry forms available from:	<a href="http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams/register">www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams/register</a>
Queries about fees:	<b>Fees Office</b> Fax: +44 (0) 20 7862 8559 Email: ipstudents.fees@london.ac.uk
To join the University of London Union (ULU):	<b>Membership Applications</b> University of London Union Malet Street London WC1E 7HY Website: <a href="http://www.ulucol.ac.uk">www.ulucol.ac.uk</a>
Queries about the presentation ceremony:	<b>Corporate Affairs, Executive Office</b> Tel: +44 (0) 20 7862 8311 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7862 8349 Email: uolia.corporateaffairs@london.ac.uk
Queries about the Alumni Association:	<b>Alumni Relations</b> Alumni Office Tel: +44 (0) 20 7664 4826 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7862 8349 Email: uolia.alumni@london.ac.uk
Technical support for the Student Portal and/or VLE:	Email: <a href="mailto:uolia.support@london.ac.uk">uolia.support@london.ac.uk</a>

# Dates to note

<b>Dates to note</b>	<b>Things to do in the year ahead</b>
<b>At the time of initial or continuing registration</b>	Contact your Examination Centre and find out their closing date for accepting examination entry forms. Examination entry forms are available online at: <a href="http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams/register">www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams/register</a> or you can contact the Student Assessment Office and we will send you a form.
<b>Overseas Examination Centre closing date</b>	Make sure you complete and send both copies of the form and the fee to the Examination Centre before the closing date. Do not send your forms direct to us.
<b>1 February</b>	<b>All entry forms from Examination Centres must be received by us no later than this date. Entries received after 1 February will only be accepted at the discretion of the University and only in exceptional circumstances.</b>
<b>10 days before the examinations start</b>	Contact your Examination Centre if you have not received an admission notice by this date. Do not contact the University.
<b>Early May</b>	Examinations normally start. Note that the University is unable to take religious and/or public holidays into account when setting the examination dates.
<b>Three weeks after the last examination</b>	Last date by which we will accept information about, and corroboration of, any medical condition or other mitigating circumstance that may have affected your examination performance.
<b>August</b>	The results of most examinations will be released during this month and will be sent directly to the Examination Centres, who are responsible for forwarding them to candidates.
<b>1 September</b>	Time to pay continuing registration, although you may wish to wait until you have your examination results.

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# Studying at an independent teaching institution



## Notes

- If you are registered for a BA degree or Diploma in English, then you can study as you choose – independently, with correspondence tuition or at an independent teaching institution that provides full- or part-time classes.

*Please read this information in conjunction with the information about institutions found in the General section.*

Students can find a full and up-to-date directory of institutions that have been recognised by the International Programmes on our website:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/online-search/institutions/index](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/online-search/institutions/index)

Please remember that enrolment with an institution is not the same as registration as an International Programmes student with the University of London. In particular, we advise you to wait for confirmation from the University that you are eligible for your chosen programme before enrolling at an institution and paying tuition fees.

To avoid disputes and misunderstandings about financial matters, you should make sure before you enrol that you understand the full extent of your commitment to the institution, especially if you have to withdraw during a course.

Students with concerns or complaints about an institution which they attend, should discuss these matters, in the first instance, with the staff of the institution. In many cases it will be possible for problems to be resolved quickly and effectively.

Although the University is always pleased to receive comments on any aspect of the International Programmes, it is only able to consider complaints about, or criticism of, an institution if the student is able to show that the issues have been brought to the attention of that institution.

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# Studying for the BA in English

The *handbook* has been written with the intention that it might be used for two main purposes. First, you will find it useful to read it through as a whole; the *handbook* provides an overview of what studying English towards a degree means, especially for students studying independently. You will almost certainly, however, also want to consult this *handbook* periodically during your studies, for specific points of reference. Its sections on the structure of the programme, and on essay writing and examination technique, are likely to be especially useful in this respect. In this way the *handbook* is a form of supplementary background to, or general context for, the various subject guides which offer more material and advice relating to the individual courses within the degree you have chosen to take.

We hope that the information in this *handbook* and the other study materials will enable you to embark on your degree programme with pleasure and confidence.

## Why take the BA degree in English?

The BA degree in English seeks to develop a broad range of skills, including general communicative competence as well as more technical skills of literary–critical analysis. During your studies, you will give close attention to a range of literary and other works written in different styles and periods. From this study you will develop an awareness of changing rhetorical techniques and effects, as well as greater knowledge of many well-known and a large number of less well-known literary works.

Most of the work in the programme is literary, rather than linguistic. But, although

relatively little detailed work is done directly on English language or linguistics, practice in interpretation coupled with the experience of planning and writing essays should develop communicative skills which are not confined to commentary on literary topics alone. Such skills are a considerable asset in a range of jobs, as well as in the process of seeking employment. So, while the programme is not vocational in the narrow sense of the word, it does allow you to develop a level of skill and critical awareness that should provide a sound basis for careers, including the Civil Service, teaching and research, journalism, radio and television, as well as a variety of posts in business. Very often it is the fundamental abilities of problem identification, analysis and debate which are perceived by examiners and potential employers as the main achievement of literary studies and the main reason for recruiting English students.

The persuasive and analytic skills you develop are applied during your studies to literary works and issues; they have the additional value that they are transferable to other problems and circumstances. Alongside the development of such transferable skills, nevertheless, the literary and cultural subject matter of your essays also offers a specific additional benefit. Because it is concerned with questions of meaning, social behaviour and structure, as well as with problems of aesthetic and cultural value, your work directs you not only towards a wide range of examples of writing but also towards greater awareness of moral and social questions surrounding the techniques through which analysis and persuasion are achieved.

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## Why choose English in the first place?

Together, the concerns outlined above establish English as a distinct area of study which is also at the intersection of a range of other disciplines in the arts, humanities and social sciences. Before describing further the particular programme of study you are about to begin, it is worth asking the general question 'why English?' more directly, in order to clarify how the interest and pleasure in books which may well lead you into the discipline connect with the sorts of outcome or benefit outlined above. In the next section, we place precisely what is offered by the degree programme within this general context, so that you can locate the content and goals of the particular degree you will be studying for within the larger framework of contemporary studies in the arts and humanities.

It is common for students starting on a course in English to express initial motivation in terms of the pleasure provided by reading books. By studying, accordingly, you might reasonably hope to find pleasure and interest in an extended range of books. At the same time, you might well also expect to extend the amount of pleasure and interest you are able to find in reading any one single book: to develop and refine your skills of reading. This second aim (or motivation), of course, simply involves enhancing interpretative skills which you already have, as either a monolingual speaker of English or as a multilingual who speaks English as one of your languages. You use the skill of interpretation whenever you understand anything someone says to you. Alongside this second kind of motivation, however, it is

also common for students to express a third sense of purpose: the desire for increased theoretical or aesthetic awareness.

All these common expectations of higher studies in English – and reasons for starting a course in the discipline – are well founded, at least in the sense that they represent aims generally shared by planners and providers of English courses. That is to say, most programmes in English are in many respects shaped around these general goals. Indeed, it is possible to say that most English degrees seek to develop abilities and awareness in each of the three areas described.

Most programmes, for instance, are organised in such a way that they serve to increase knowledge of a large number of books. Such study contributes to a developing sense of how these books relate to one another (and in so doing contribute to the 'culture' of which they form the 'literature'). Sometimes, study is directed especially towards books which have been celebrated and revered over a long period (often called 'canonical works'); sometimes attention is directed, by contrast, specifically towards works which are either neglected by, or especially problematic or troublesome to, such canonical groupings (e.g. work by women authors which has, until recently, been omitted from syllabuses or texts which – because of the ways in which they are written – don't fit easily into canonical groupings).

Most programmes in English would also claim to develop descriptive and analytic skills, which can be applied in a variety of professions where interpretation or communication plays an important role.

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The development of such skills generally involves establishing for yourself not only habits and techniques of close observation, but also a suitable language in which you can talk about, and so increasingly understand, how language works.

Finally, most programmes in English draw attention to, and create added awareness of, such issues as: point of view and bias; how interpretations are arrived at; how value judgments or an overall sense of taste are devised or defended. Critical or theoretical issues of this kind involve understanding not only particular books, but also the relationship between such books and the societies in which they were produced and in which they circulate. At this point, it is clear that questions of literature intersect closely with issues in philosophy, anthropology, sociology and politics; in recent years (as we suggest below), English studies have increasingly emphasised their affinities with these other disciplines.

In most courses in English in higher education, then, 'reading English' means at least the following:

- reading, interpreting and commenting on a series of prescribed books, and considering the relationships (e.g. of influence) between them
- developing appropriate analytic and study skills, in order to articulate observations and impressions about works clearly, and to be able to explain what evidence or framework of argument such views are derived from
- developing a general critical awareness, and sense of what makes books important culturally or politically

- investigating why works are written as well as how they are written.

But there is also a fourth dimension, which has not yet been mentioned: writing coherently, in an accepted academic style, on any of the above topics. Although much of the anticipated pleasure and interest in English studies is based on reading, it is through written work that you are assessed; and so it is to written work that you will devote much of your time. Accordingly, we consider the writing of assessed essays in some detail below, and also recommend particular guidebooks which offer instruction in essay-writing techniques.

The precise balance between elements which make up degree-level study in English varies enormously from programme to programme. We describe in the next subsection how the aims and content of English courses have, in any case, changed dramatically over the last three decades.

## English studies today

All fields of study (from English to Physics to Nursing) change in content and procedures over time; education is not static. Studying for a degree in English now is therefore going to be different from what it might have been like in the 1950s, 1960s or 1970s. Changes are brought about by a range of factors. Partly they result from changes in political climate (e.g. feminism has produced new questions to be investigated and insists that many previously neglected works should be studied). Partly they are caused by shifts in educational emphasis (e.g. in ideas of how learning takes place; what

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forms of assessment are believed to be appropriate to test learning) and partly they are the result of shifts within a particular field (e.g. exactly what is taken to mean the study of 'English').

The last 30 years have marked a period of quite major change in English studies in particular. Many established traditions of thought have been queried and reconsidered during this period, and changes have taken place both in the range of books it is thought appropriate to study and in what studying any book might mean. It is important to bear this process of change within the discipline in mind, if you are to see how the objectives and materials you will be studying coincide with (or differ from) what you remember of English studies from school. It may also affect the impression you might form of the discipline from collections of literary essays to be found in the local bookshop or public library.

To begin to understand the changes that have taken place in English studies, we need to go back briefly to the origins of the discipline. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Britain, the study of secular texts, alongside study of religious works, increasingly formed part of school syllabuses – but usually as an aid to the study of grammar and of rhetoric rather than for the special interest or value of the texts themselves. Gradually, more anthologies of English literary writing were used in classes, although English 'literature' was still generally seen as a leisure pursuit (and as a marker of social status), rather than as an academic discipline. Studying literature, as opposed

to reading literary works during leisure time, generally still meant studying Latin and Greek.

The first university departments of English appeared in the nineteenth century: in Britain, in the USA, and in at least one country still colonised at that time by Britain, India. Several forces led to this development, which reveals many of the dominant features of English studies throughout its history. Literature was increasingly perceived, during the nineteenth century, as a source of moral value, especially in the context of what might be seen as a crisis in Christian teaching surrounding the rise in belief in the theory of evolution, epitomised in the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* in 1859. At the same time, English was seen as an easier alternative to the learning of the classics (Latin and Greek), and was given broader educational provision following the introduction of compulsory education in 1870. Relatedly, the study of English literature was seen as an appropriate subject for women, who were increasingly admitted into public higher education during the second half of the nineteenth century. In the USA, these forces were compounded by recent immigrants' anxiety about their skills in using the English language; in India, English literature was considered by some administrators as a way of teaching Christian stories and values (since these form a necessary context for understanding the English literary canon), as well as being perceived as a symbol of British cultural pre-eminence.

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This complex of purposes continued into the first half of the twentieth century, when much (though not all) of the debate in and about English studies centred on questions of morality and the value of literature, as well as on the content and boundaries of a national literary tradition. Sophisticated techniques of close analysis were developed to help the discernment of value in literary works; by many, the study of literature was seen (as it had been in the nineteenth century) as a possible defence against the further imperilment of culture by emergent popular arts such as cinema and commercialised popular music, as well as by a relative decline and instability in patrician forms of 'high' culture. Although detailed arguments took place over which traditions of work best represented human sensibility or national tradition, considerable consensus still existed over the general, moral function of the study of literature as a refining and civilising influence.

Since at least the 1950s, however, the link between writing, cultural values and ideas of nation and nationalism has been questioned, from a number of different perspectives. The distortion of national traditions of literature by the neglect and, in many cases, complete omission of women, black writers and other minorities has been challenged and to some degree modified. The role of literature in the formation and sustenance of national and political ideologies has been increasingly investigated and seen as an important issue to be addressed. In these and other ways, more socially 'critical', 'anthropological' goals and techniques have been applied to the study of

literature. Studying literature is, as a result, less often seen as a ritual confirming social identity than as an analysis of how society and culture have come to be the way they are. Since the 1960s, a great deal of work in philosophy has investigated systems of meaning; this has led to new analyses of many of the major canonical texts and critical commentaries – analyses which show how many of the meanings which have been drawn from them in earlier criticism may be less stable and more elusive than was previously imagined.

The current period, then, is one of major change – of dialogue between positions and viewpoints, rather than of a single, decisive transformation. All intellectual fields are characterised by a number of different approaches, and English is no exception. One practical result of this, however, is that, if you look at a collection of books of criticism on a shelf, you will quickly discover that they represent a range of different perspectives. During the 150 years in which the subject has existed on a national scale in higher education, English studies have accumulated a number of quite divergent approaches which you will encounter during your studies. These approaches are in some respects like sedimented layers of earth in the ground: each is interesting in its own right, but you will achieve greater understanding by being able to distinguish them as related historical strata. Only by detaching yourself from any one view – and so entertaining the range of competing alternative views on the topics you are studying – can you genuinely hope to identify your own questions and answers, rather than imitating the concerns and style

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of others. Bear in mind, too, that there are rarely definitive answers in literary studies (except over local matters of historical fact); a great deal depends on how you explain, justify and provide a context for the arguments you choose to make.

## English and other related subjects

The diversity of approaches in contemporary English studies, which results from its history and which will enable you to develop your own emphasis and interests in your studies for this degree, raises the question of how English intersects with other fields evidently closely related to it (which you might equally have chosen to study). How far will the work you do enrich your experience of texts other than literary ones? And to what extent can knowledge and ideas you have about the English language, painting, film or popular music be incorporated in the study you do for English?

The answer to this question is that you are encouraged to draw on your experience and knowledge of other art forms, media and related fields, so long as you preserve the general focus of the English degree, and observe its local, course requirements. Consider the English language as an example. A basic understanding of what language is, how language works and how we can describe it, seems a precondition of understanding or commenting on literary texts, insofar as they consist of English language. Yet your English programme is not a course in grammar or English as a foreign language or linguistics. Nevertheless, whatever you learn from linguistics will undoubtedly

pay dividends in your English study, even though the aims of a course in linguistics itself would be rather different (e.g. in stressing the general mechanisms and structures of language, how humans can understand and use language, how languages vary).

A similar situation arises as regards media, communication and cultural studies (as well as art history). Each of these fields grew historically, to some extent, out of English critical studies (as well as, more recently, out of sociology). But each has sought greater space in which to examine the changing media environment of twentieth- and twenty-first century societies, as well as the wide range of contemporary popular forms of entertainment and culture (such as pop music, fashion or sport). Such disciplines draw on many investigative techniques (such as close textual analysis) which characterise English literary studies; but they differ in other respects, for example in the degree to which they are interested in audience analysis and in the producers of, and markets for, texts. So whatever you learn from these fields will reflect back very positively on your understanding of books and audiences in a literature course, and can be used accordingly.

Women's studies provide another instance of a field which is both part of English studies, but is also a broader, distinct discipline in itself. It is evidently important to understand questions specifically related to women in literature (of women authors, of feminist publishing companies, of notions of a distinct

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gendered language or style). Other proper concerns of women's studies, nevertheless, address more general questions (e.g. of work, childcare), and draw on other disciplines and methodologies which are not directly part of literary studies. Again, what you read and learn in women's studies contributes to the growth of your work in English.

Finally, we should mention Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology. Arguably, the study of literature could be considered a sub-part of any one of these fields: psychology, because reading and responding to literary works is one among many cognitive activities we carry out and clearly draws on more general cognitive mechanisms that it is the concern of psychology to investigate; sociology and anthropology, because these fields are concerned with the analysis of social structure, symbolism and ritual, and it is easy to see literature as a complex instance of exactly these phenomena. As with the other disciplines cognate to English studies described above, understanding these fields is likely to have an enriching influence on your literary study, as well as broadening your intellectual horizons and locating your study within a broader framework of cultural analysis.

To sum up this discussion of disciplines closely connected with English, then, we can say that it is highly desirable that you should follow developments in these fields in your reading, as well as on television, in the news, in relevant feature articles in magazines. It is nevertheless important to retain a clear sense of your

own aims in any particular analysis you are undertaking or topic you are studying. If you don't, you are likely to find either that you feel committed to contradictory approaches which you can't find any way of resolving, or that your work becomes a sort of kaleidoscopic pastiche – one moment imitating sociology, the next moment traditional literary criticism. Subject to these pieces of advice, however, you should draw freely on work in areas of linguistic and cultural analysis: literary study is one specialist domain – arguably a central or mediating one – within the more general field of arts and humanities.

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# The University of London BA English degree for International Programmes students

## Aims of the programme

Having established the general context laid out above, we should now consider in more detail your own chosen programme of study: the University of London International Programmes BA degree in English. How does it fit into the large and changing patterns of English studies we have outlined?

The programme as a whole is designed to provide you with the opportunity to achieve two connected aims:

1. to read widely across the full range of literatures in English, as well as to engage closely with selected works within this broad range
2. to develop the necessary critical and linguistic skills to enable you to read, discuss and write about literary and non-literary texts effectively and with confidence.

As we will see in more detail, the various options available within the programme ensure a historical view of writing in English; they also allow for specialisation in particular areas of interest, including a number of thematic and genre-based approaches to literature, linguistic analysis, and literary criticism and theory.

The aims described above are the programme's stated aims. But we recognise that you will also have your own aims. These should not be neglected or subjugated under the 'official' aims of the degree. Rather, to work effectively, you should combine your own personal aims (such as reading more novels by women authors, or understanding socialist approaches to the arts) with those of the

programme, or at least work out how they can be made to be compatible. Range is certainly an important element of the degree, and is ensured by various aspects of our Regulations (such as the rule that you cannot duplicate material from one answer to another, and that you must study a minimum number of different historical periods). However, it is still easily possible for you to develop your own particular interests through the selections of material you make: to combine the prescribed range with a 'slant' in your own preferred direction.

It is important to bear in mind that the aims of different courses which make up the degree programme are different from one another. You therefore need to read the aims of each course closely, and to consider the overall selection and organisation of materials within the programme, in order to determine its exact learning objectives. Don't simply assume that all courses demand the same type of work from you, or can be prepared for in the same way. You will need to adapt your study techniques to the different demands of different kinds of course.

Each course you take within the programme has its own specific objectives, which are made clear in the relevant accompanying materials. You must familiarise yourself with them, not least since the examination for the course seeks to explore your understanding of and response to those aims, and not others. In particular, you should not assume that in all courses you will be invited to give your response to or interpretation of a book or books you have read. So don't prepare by

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just deciding that whatever you are asked, you will give an account of what given texts mean to you, or why you liked or didn't like them. To do so in some courses (e.g. a course on theories of interpretation, rather than one on particular works or existing critical interpretations of them) is to introduce irrelevant material and will not be rewarded. Stay close to the question, and bear in mind what type of question you are answering.

## Changes to the programme

From time to time the programme may be subject to update and revision and you should always refer to the Regulations.

## Scope and structure of the programme

The courses you are offered in the programme reflect the statements of aim we have made so far; but those aims are embodied in an organisational structure which we should now explain. (You should consult the Regulations for more details on how this structure works in practice.)

The BA English degree is constructed on a modular basis, the overall syllabus being divided into constituent courses. Each year, you take between one and four courses. The maximum of four excludes any courses failed in a previous year for which the student wishes to resit the examination. The total number of courses you must take (and enter the examination for) is 12, and you must pass at least 10 of these in order to obtain a degree (please consult the latest Regulations for a detailed explanation of which particular courses **must** be passed in order to be eligible for the degree).

## Difference between Foundation and Advanced courses

You will notice that the courses outlined in the Regulations are not all at the same level; some are described as being Foundation courses, others as Advanced courses or Level 4, Level 5 and Level 6 courses. This is something that needs to be explained.

For students studying at one of the Colleges of the University on the equivalent University of London programme, the idea of 'level' corresponds to one year of full-time study. 'Level' indicates an agreed standard or scale of demands which a course is likely to make on a student. Level 4, for instance, requires more knowledge and analytical ability than 18-plus school-leaving examinations, but is not as demanding as the courses offered at Levels 5 and 6 (which are the second- and third-year courses equivalent to the Advanced courses in the International Programmes). In this sense, the Foundation courses (Level 4) act as preparation for the more specialised and advanced work that follows; and they can be seen as a useful transition from schoolwork to university studies. The fact that marks for these courses do not contribute greatly to the final degree classification encourages students to experiment during the early stages of the programme, and so adjust to the new and different demands made by Advanced level study. See the Regulations for details of how the marks obtained in Foundation courses contribute to the final degree classification.

### **Advanced course strands**

Just as courses differ in 'level', they also vary in another way: they are not all of the same type, or concerned with the same sort of material or aims. The syllabus is organised around two different kinds of work.

In the 'A' or 'Level 5' subjects, material is organised according to period. So at this level/strand you will find **Literature of the later Middle Ages, Renaissance and Restoration** and other period-based courses. The idea of a literary 'period' guides you towards the sorts of things you will need to know and to have thought about during your work on these subjects. You will certainly need to read the specified authors and books closely; but you will also be expected to investigate how the prescribed works contribute to an overall sense of what characterises the 'period', and to relate to its concerns or circumstances, especially the social and political setting. It is recognised, of course, that 'period' is not a straightforward term, and that it is questionable how unified the cultural forms of any given time period are; history is a continuum and is not prepackaged in periods. But this is a problem to tackle in your study, rather than an impediment to it. You should consider how periods are formed and categorised, and should reflect on why they are conceived in the ways they are (e.g. named after monarchs; after historical events; after artistic movements). Pay particular attention to the name of the period: it often provides a major clue to the concerns you will be expected to consider.

In the 'B' or 'Level 6' subjects, material

and study processes are organised around themes and topics (which can include a range of different sorts of category: genre, author, political questions such as those of gender, particular literary themes or conventions). These subjects enable you to focus more closely on topics for which you are prepared by the general historical and methodological frameworks you are in the process of acquiring from your Foundation and 'A' (Level 4 and 5) subjects. It can be helpful to think of these as 'case study' subjects: each offers an area of enquiry which requires you to deploy a range of skills and judgments, bringing together approaches and observations you have developed and tested against more general groupings of works or examples. Each subject in the 'B' group or at Level 6 has its own distinct focus and they cannot all be approached in the same way. As you select subjects, therefore, you should look carefully, not only at the prescribed material you will be expected to read, but also at the subjects' aims – since these will guide you as regards how you might organise your study, and what questions or problems the course seeks to address.

### **The curriculum as a whole**

By combining the ideas of 'strand' and 'level', it is possible to see the overall 'architecture' of the degree curriculum.

Advanced courses build on the foundations, and provide a variety of options which allow you to pursue your own particular interests. The two strands of courses ('A' and 'B' or of Level 5 and 6) ensure development in the channels that are thought essential to the degree (historical knowledge; conceptual and

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theoretical awareness; and ability to work on thematic or topical questions). At the same time, the scope for combination of elements allows you to select more specialised fields of enquiry within the broad field of study prescribed, and so follow a path through the degree which foregrounds or emphasises interests, tastes and concerns of your own.

You will notice that the Foundation courses are not explicitly identified as belonging to the particular strands; but they are nevertheless organised roughly around them. **Explorations in literature** offers you an opportunity to read and discuss selected works of poetry, prose and drama from the Bible and Homer to the present day. But, importantly, these courses also help you to make considered choices from the Advanced course options, especially the 'A' and 'Level 5' subjects. **Approaches to text** introduces you to the methods, terminology and theories required in the analysis of literary, non-literary and media texts. In doing so, it also helps you prepare for certain of the 'B' or 'Level 6' courses at the advanced level. **Renaissance comedy: Shakespeare and Jonson** prepares you for the study of genre and the relationship of literature to historical and cultural context which will be useful for all 'A' and 'Level 5' and some 'B' and 'Level 6' Advanced courses.

At the Advanced level, you take eight courses. Please refer to the Regulations for a full list of current courses at 'Foundation' or 'Level 4' and 'Advanced' or 'Level 5 and 6'.

A lot of thought on the University's part has gone into the preparation of a suitable overall programme structure, and you should think carefully about your selections within the range of options. Take time to consult the syllabus for each course. In each option, there is an intellectual satisfaction to be gained, and each suggests a particular inflection of the range of interests which have probably brought you into English studies. It may be worth bearing in mind that students typically do best at what they most enjoy (and anyone looking at your final degree result will show less interest in the particular options you chose than in the overall classification, so these choices are very much an opportunity for you to explore your own preferences).

As well as thinking carefully about the choices you make, you should also consider the sequence in which you wish to take courses. Do you want to study general courses before more specific ones (in order to gain a general perspective before working on close detail)? Or do you wish to adopt a more chronological form of study (e.g. by selecting **Literature of the later Middle Ages** and **Renaissance and Restoration** before going on to more modern courses)? Or do you wish to adopt a mixed diet, on the principle that a mixture of different sorts of work will keep you most interested and enable you to try out a range of different kinds of work while there is still time left in which to adopt more specialised choices?

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## The importance of Shakespeare and Chaucer within the syllabus

Your attention is drawn to the importance of certain authors, playwrights and poets, especially Shakespeare, within the overall programme. While there is an almost infinite number of writers worthy of detailed study, certain authors have gained special significance over a long period in the study of literature as a result of historical factors which supplement the evident achievements of the particular works they produced. The achievement of Shakespeare, for instance, is compounded by the complex network of literary allusions and references made to Shakespeare's work in later writing and other arts, with the result that Shakespeare features strongly in any construction of – or argument about – literary traditions or a literary canon. The importance of familiarity with and understanding of Shakespeare's work is further enhanced by the constant reworking of his plays in new and changing forms of production, and by the scale of direct influence exerted by Shakespeare and by Shakespearean themes over later writers, even where direct quotation or reference is not visible.

For these reasons, students will be required to demonstrate where appropriate, in their assessed work and examination performance, familiarity with the writings and influence of Shakespeare. Successful completion of the courses **Explorations in literature** and **Renaissance and Restoration** will normally involve evidence being shown of study of Shakespeare's writings.

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# Planning your studies

## Period of study

A decision on your period of study is one of the most important that you will have to make. Your choice should follow from a careful assessment of your own aptitudes and speed of learning, and you should make at least a provisional decision before you start to plan out your detailed programme. A reasonable guide to use when deciding your period of study is that it should not have to be extended, but may be shortened if your progress is faster than you originally estimated. So be pessimistic rather than optimistic in making your initial assessment; then monitor your progress carefully against your projected plan as you go along.

As an International Programmes student you can complete the degree programme in three years like your Goldsmiths campus student counterpart. The Regulations explain this in greater detail. However, it will seldom be feasible or desirable to attempt the degree in three years (unless you are studying full time, even though independently); and you are not advised to embark on such a crash programme without first taking advice (see Contacts pages for details). In particular, students who do not already hold a degree or comparable professional qualification obtained by examination are advised to spread their studies over a longer period. There are two good reasons for this warning. First, you are limited in the number of times you can enter the examinations (currently three times: see the Regulations for details of this); accordingly, premature attempts may prejudice your ultimate success. Secondly, on the whole, a longer period

of preparation means a better class of degree, not only in terms of the formal classification achieved but also in terms of general intellectual development and attainment.

It is worth saying, too, that it is probably unwise to study for another award at the same time as you are studying for the University of London International Programmes BA English degree. If you do, your chances of success in both examinations are likely to be reduced, as the demands are likely to be impossible to meet satisfactorily. Even where two syllabuses look similar or complementary, the approach required is likely to be different, so that one programme will not adequately prepare you for the two distinct series of examinations.

As at many other points, you may find it helpful to remember that the standard of the BA examinations for International Programmes students is the same as for undergraduate students at Colleges of the University working throughout the year at their studies and participating in other University activities. There are no concessions made for International Programmes students or allowances for the circumstances in which your work takes place. Students studying at Colleges of the University, you may be interested to know, have on average eight to 10 hours of classes per week, plus dedicated study and essay-writing time, over 30 weeks of term time. They also have long periods for intensive vacation reading. Frequently, of course, the greater experience, relevant employment or previous periods of study of International Programmes students can compensate for lack of time to study. But since a university

degree is, among other things, a mark of intellectual development, and is assessed in ways which are both wide-ranging and in depth, short cuts achieved by cramming are likely to be counter-productive. Sufficient time should be found, even by extending your period of study, both to read and think about your work. You are advised against skimming any subject which proves unattractive or which you think has no practical value.

After working out how best to use your time in general terms, you will need to plan how to integrate your studies with the rest of your social and/or working life. To do this will require a clear idea of how long different activities take. Do not be afraid, therefore, to set aside time to review how well – or how badly – you are using your time.

- How long, for example, does it take you to get started, making the change from other occupations or ways of thinking into a 'studying mode'?
- How long does it take you to read a given number of pages?
- How much additional time do you need to make notes? At what time of day do you work best?
- How easy do you find it to write (and what stages of the task of writing are most difficult for you)?

These are the kinds of judgments you can only make on the basis of experience, so you will need to monitor your progress and make adjustments, especially during the early stages of study.

At all costs, avoid approaching your study in an unplanned way, even if you are someone who is usually happy with loose structures.

Studying externally is a long-term challenge of self-discipline and organisation, so measure and plan what you can do, then try to stick to what you have decided. Be prepared, nevertheless, to make adjustments in the light of experience. And don't hesitate to discuss your experiences and difficulties with any other students you know who are engaged in a similar programme of study. Problems in studying are not always as individual or unique as they seem, and it can be very reassuring to discover that other people experience (and are tackling) similar difficulties.

## Your timetable

Individuals differ in how many hours per week they need to devote to study. It is therefore difficult to be precise, or to make suggestions. A rough guide is that you should be prepared for not less than 10 hours of study per week (15 hours is the level recommended as a norm by many academics involved in distance-learning programmes). In most cases, it is important that the hours devoted to study (however many that may be) follow a consistent pattern, in order to maintain continuity and prevent you from having to 'restart' each time you try to work. It is probably a mistake, too, to let initial enthusiasm lead you into attempting so much to begin with that you have to tail off later.

You should also recognise that a certain amount of recreation is needed to keep you alert and able to absorb knowledge and concepts critically. Not all your leisure time should be given to study, therefore, even if that is possible. If there are periods when study is extremely difficult or even impossible, you shouldn't be

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discouraged, so long as these are not too frequent or too prolonged. In fact, you may find 'time away' improves your sense of perception. Studying independently gives you the advantage of flexibility in such circumstances; the Regulations are designed to help you accommodate changes of circumstance or of scale of commitment. Isolation creates anxiety, however, so recognise this and devise strategies to cope rather than assuming from the outset that such anxieties will not affect you. There is nothing wrong if you become demoralised from time to time with the long and arduous process of combining study for a degree with a life full of other commitments and priorities.

Be realistic about time in your planning. And suit yourself – everyone works differently, and your best working patterns may well be different from those which other people might expect from you. The aim should be to develop your own routines, not to regulate your working habits to a conventional norm. So treat advice from others, including advice in this *handbook* and in the subject guides, as helpful but not definitive (the Regulations, on the other hand, are definitive).

Allow for unexpected breaks such as days when libraries are closed, delays while materials arrive through the post, days when you don't feel like working. And create breaks deliberately. For example, you should introduce variation into your working patterns. Read for a while, then do some writing or some research by browsing in a library; such changes can reduce the effect of strain or tiredness from long bouts of reading or writing –

something which is particularly important for health reasons if you work at a computer.

## A place to study

Many students find that their place of study can be as important as their timetable. Concentration is required, often for long periods; sometimes when you can't achieve such concentration, this is for external reasons rather than as a result of your own inability or lack of motivation.

To create a comfortable working environment, you will need access to a quiet room of your own in which to work (or failing this, a room you can claim as your own for fixed – or at least pre-arranged and predictable – times of the week) or even the library. Find the place where you feel most comfortable and alert, and make a habit of working there. It is sometimes difficult to convince people that studying requires undivided attention (and so 'quality time'), rather than just 'time'; it can be a good idea to discuss this practical aspect of studying with the people you live with before your needs are perceived as a problem, or as an unreasonable or unforeseen demand. People work differently in terms of spatial and physical needs, as in all other ways, so there are no real norms; but routine is very often considered important – especially as it provides those close to you with routines, too (they also need to know when you will want to talk, and when you will want them to be quiet!).

Although routine can provide a great deal of support during your studies, it is worth varying your workplace occasionally, in order to provide interest and new sources

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of stimulation. Sometimes the stimulus of a new room or atmosphere triggers off ideas which have been dormant until then. Sometimes working in a library, for instance, can create a sense of academic involvement and motivation even if you are not actually consulting the books specific to that library.

Make your own decision, too, as regards background music. For every person who cannot study at all if there is even a clock ticking in the room, there is another who finds it essential for concentration to have a radio or CD on.

In general terms, no special equipment is needed for work on the English degree, so there will be no special demands on your room in this respect. Your examinations, of course, will be written in pen rather than typed. And although a computer or a word processor is highly desirable (since it can save you a great deal of work in storing, editing and arranging your materials and draft essays) it is not essential; you will not be seriously disadvantaged by not having access to such technology.

## Keeping going

Nobody (who knows anything about it) thinks studying independently is easy, and in every distance-learning programme, a substantial number of students drop out before completing the programme.

For some people, the sense of isolation and lack of face-to-face teaching inhibit their ability to learn, or to sustain interest in, and stamina for, learning. Others may encounter difficulties because of changing circumstances and commitments at home or at work. Whatever the reason,

a major consequence of this aspect of studying independently may be that you fall behind in your work schedule and get discouraged. Suddenly there seems too much to do, the examination is looming, and you decide to drop out.

Years or even months later, many students come to regret such a decision. We have already emphasised that independent study is not easy, but it is made very flexible by the Regulations, precisely to enable people to work round the vicissitudes that affect International Programmes students. You decide when to enter the examination – when you feel ready to do so. If you feel that you are not ready in a particular year, then you can generally postpone your entry until another year (subject to limits imposed by the Regulations). If you find yourself dropping behind, therefore, do not rush into a hasty decision about your programme as a whole – a decision which you may regret later. Get in touch with the Student Assessment Office, so that we can talk through your difficulties with you and give you advice.

Sometimes the problem is not so much getting behind, but rather the disruption your studies can cause to other aspects of your life. Your family, friends and possibly colleagues at work may be sceptical about what you are doing, or sceptical about your chances of success, or even hostile to the amount of time you are obliged to allocate to your studies. The opposite, of course, may equally be true: your family may have saved for years to give you the opportunity to study, or they may feel that your achievement will confer something

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on them by proxy and this may make you feel weighed down by pressure to succeed because of how much they have invested in you. There is no easy advice to be given here, except that many students who have gone through such experiences say that this sort of problem is best talked through, early on, with the people concerned. This helps others to understand your point of view as well as helping you to understand theirs. Remember that a large number of people go through an educational experience of the kind you are undertaking, and although aspects of your situation will inevitably be unique, many of the general problems and dynamics of study are not. Such problems are in many respects structural rather than personal. The most important thing is: don't blame yourself (doing so will only add guilt to the problem).

Finally, if you are considering dropping your studies, we suggest that you consult with your teachers, if you are following a course of tuition, or with the Programme Director, before making a final decision. If, having done this, you still feel that you should discontinue your studies, the decision will be a considered response to your circumstances – and one which you can regard in a wholly positive light. There is no such thing as total failure, especially if you recognise the process of setting out and beginning to study as goals in themselves.

## What to expect from studying

In many respects, being an International Programmes student is harder than being a student at one of the Colleges of the

University. There is little or no peer group support, less frequent feedback from tutors, no structured time or immediately available resources (such as computer rooms and college libraries). But in other ways being an International Programmes student has its advantages. There is greater independence, especially as regards the pace of study, and studying is often embedded in other sorts of active commitment, either domestically or professionally.

It is common, however, despite the compensating advantages of being an International Programmes student, for such students to feel not only disadvantaged in terms of resources, but to translate that feeling of being disadvantaged into a misplaced sense of personal inadequacy. In such circumstances, you need to be sure not to undervalue yourself or your own skills and experiences. Learn to value the skills you have acquired from your own personal and professional experience, such as the ability to reflect critically on what you see and hear; to look at issues or problems from more than one point of view; to structure and present an argument, emphasising what seem likely to be the most persuasive and least contestable points; to adjudicate between conflicting opinions, or versions of events; to make connections or explore relations between disparate ideas. The skills you will develop on the programme are not essentially different from these life skills; you will simply be learning to apply them to new materials.

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## Study support

The International Programmes run support schemes for students studying for the BA and Diploma in English:

- A marking scheme that allows students to send essays to Goldsmiths to be marked by members of staff.
- A programme of online seminars (called 'e-seminars') run through the English VLE. A range of topics and texts drawn from the English courses are discussed online under the guidance of an academic tutor. The English VLE also hosts discussion groups covering study skills and examination preparation.

If you would like further information on these services, including information on how to enrol and pay, please consult our website at:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current\\_students/english/](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current_students/english/)

Alternatively, if you do not have access to the internet, please request more information using the following contacts:

Programme Director  
Department of English and  
Comparative Literature  
Goldsmiths, University of London  
Lewisham Way  
New Cross  
London SE14 6NW  
United Kingdom  
Email: [s.barnsley@gold.ac.uk](mailto:s.barnsley@gold.ac.uk)  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7717 2990  
Fax: + 44 (0)20 7919 7453

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# The process of studying

## Using the subject guides

Each course is discussed in some detail in a relevant subject guide. The guides have all been prepared by academics who are not only expert in their specialist field but also committed to meeting the specific needs of International Programmes students. The authors of the subject guides teach students studying at Colleges of the University for the degree throughout the year, and so have close experience of difficulties likely to be encountered, and have adjusted the guides in the light of feedback from students and colleagues involved. Accordingly, each guide is designed to give you an informed and up-to-date commentary on what you should look for in relation to each prescribed topic in the syllabus.

The subject guides set out the aims of each course; they also list prescribed texts and recommended critical reading, and introduce you to the main issues covered. But the guides are not complete self-study packages: they are not supposed to be substitutes for textbooks or works of criticism. They cannot be. Rather, they supplement the description of prescribed subject content provided by the official syllabus included in the Regulations with a more detailed outline of what the course aims to achieve, what sorts of study will be required within it, what qualities make up a good answer to examination questions on the sorts of topics prescribed, and what reading you should do. Each subject guide acts as a general introduction to a subject, and equips you with the materials and concepts you need; you can then take things further on your own.

The actual course itself is made up of the books prescribed, plus secondary materials recommended in the subject guide and whatever other materials beyond this are indicated as being relevant and desirable. What you need to do, in order to turn this sort of outline and recommendation for further reading into a study process that you can follow, is to view the course as a series of selected interrelated topics for study. You identify topics within the syllabus, read and assess relevant materials, and formulate your own ideas and personal interests in relation to them. As you do this, you compare your ideas with those circulating in the relevant secondary literature – not in order to replace your ideas with those you can find in authoritative sources, but in order to add further reference points to the process of formulating your own arguments and positions. Later, it is a good idea to test yourself against the sample questions and sample examination papers provided each year: would you be able to answer all the questions on the topics you have prepared, given the work you have done? Anticipate possible alternative questions, which may not have been asked so far but which seem consistent with the aims and scope of the course.

Besides reading the subject guide, you will need to do a lot of work on your own, especially extensive reading and note-taking. The annotated reading lists provided in the subject guides will help you to decide what is most useful (remember: read what is manageable, not everything in every list!). When deciding on your priorities within the recommended reading, take into account not only the

indications in the subject guides (especially which texts are asterisked \*) but also your own personal tastes and proven strengths. Choose what you like and what you are good at; mix this with new topics that you would like to know more about and are interested in (so that while you mainly play to your strengths you don't stultify yourself by choosing only topics that you already know something about). It must be emphasised that you will need to do a lot of thinking to supplement what the subject guides give you; they serve to orient you towards the demands of the course, but cannot guide you through each stage or topic of the course itself.

### Some initial reading and preparation

The following general and introductory works are likely to be useful in providing background, terminology and relevant history for the English programme. Each contains a bibliography, from which you will be able to find further, more specialised reading. Remember: booklists provided in education usually list alternatives, rather than a list of books you need to work through exhaustively. Learn to pick and choose. We have asterisked (\*) books which are particularly recommended for use as background to more than one course, or which have been written for a purpose close to that of the degree.

In some cases (where the book is thought to be particularly useful for the degree programme), a short description is offered to give you a sense of what it contains and also what level of difficulty you might anticipate in reading it.

### Reference books and other sources

During your studies you are likely to need to consult a range of different sorts of reference works usually held in libraries. Many suitable reference sources exist and so, instead of recommending particular ones, we indicate instead what sorts of reference books you are most likely to find useful. You will need, for instance, a good English dictionary, and in some cases should consult the *Oxford English Dictionary*, since this has detailed histories of individual words, including the different meanings they have carried in different periods (with examples of each meaning). Other specialised dictionaries will also be useful – for example, dictionaries of literary terms, of specialised fields such as linguistics or literary theory, and of classical mythology (in order that you can understand the frequent classical allusions in literary works). Dictionaries of quotations and concordances are useful, too, to help you trace previous uses of particular words and phrases, or – by using a concordance – to compare different uses of a word within the writing of a single author. At some point you are also likely to need a literary annals (a list of works written in each successive year, in many editions listed in parallel with major historical events). Finally, you should not overlook the usefulness of general encyclopedias, especially *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, which has extremely useful and detailed entries on authors, periods, styles, literary concepts and many other topics relevant to English studies.

To work successfully through the degree, nevertheless, you will find it essential to own some basic books. Alongside

general reference sources, you may find it useful to make frequent reference to the following books (which may well be the ones – alongside the prescribed literary works themselves – you will find most useful to buy):

Abrams, M.H. and G. Harpham  
*A Glossary of Literary Terms*. (Boston, Mass: Thomson, Wadsworth, 2005) eighth edition [ISBN 9781413002188]. Alphabetically listed entries (in effect, mini-essays) on major literary concepts, including recent concepts in literary theory.

\*Baldick, C. *The Dictionary of Literary Terms*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) [ISBN 9780199208272]. An expanded and fully updated edition of this best selling dictionary.

Williams, R. *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985) [ISBN 9780195204698]. Dictionary of terms used in the discussion of society and culture, with detailed historical essays on each.

Wolfreys, J. *Critical Keywords in Literary and Cultural Theory*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) [ISBN 9780333960592].

### **Books and online resources on the history of English literature, etc.**

Rogers, P. (ed.) *Oxford Illustrated History of English Literature*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) [ISBN 9780192854377]. Very introductory, but useful in offering an overview, and in enabling you to link up literary history with relevant visual images of each period.

Sanders, A. *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) [ISBN 9780199263387].

Oxford University Press has produced a 13-volume edition of the *Oxford English Literary History*, which covers the whole history of English literature from medieval times to the postcolonial era. Check the OUP website ([www.oup.com](http://www.oup.com)) for details of volumes which may be appropriate to a particular period you may wish to study.

The Literary Encyclopedia at:

[www.litencyc.com](http://www.litencyc.com)

is an online system of databases that provides up-to-date 2,500-word profiles of literary authors, works and topics. Requires paid membership.

### **Books on developing interpretative and reading skills for literary studies**

\*Barry, P. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009) [ISBN 9780719079276].

Durant, A. and N. Fabb *Literary Studies in Action*. (London: Routledge, 1990) [ISBN 9780415029452]. Designed for individual self-study; exposition linked to more than 100 do-it-yourself activities.

Eaglestone, R. *Doing English: A Guide for Literature Students*. (London: Routledge, 2002) [ISBN 9780415284233].

Eagleton, T. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008) second edition [ISBN 9781405179218].

Leech, G. *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*. (Harlow: Longman, 1973) [ISBN 9780582550131]. Best detailed guide to linguistic concepts used in literary criticism, well illustrated with sample analyses.

Leech, G. and M.H. *Short Style in Fiction*. (London: Longman, 2007) second edition [ISBN 9780582784093]. As above.

Lodge, D. (ed.) *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism: A Reader*. (Harlow: Longman, 1972) [ISBN 97805824842211]. Wide-ranging selection of major sources, rather than summaries.

Lodge, D. and N. Wood *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*. (London: Longman, 2008) third edition [ISBN 97805827845431]. As above, but of recent developments in literary theory.

Lodge, D. *The Art of Fiction*. (London: Penguin, 1993) [ISBN 9780140174922]. Excellent, alphabetically listed, former newspaper pieces on all major techniques used in novels.

Rivkin, J. and M. Ryan (eds) *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004) second edition [ISBN 9781405106955 (pbk)].

### **Books on English language and linguistics**

Aitchison, J. *Teach Yourself Linguistics*. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2003) [ISBN 9780340870839]. A clear, accessible introduction.

Ballard, K. *The Frameworks of English: Introducing Language Structures*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007) second edition [ISBN 9780230013148].

Crystal, D. *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of the English Language*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) second edition [ISBN 9780521823487].

Crystal, D. *Who Cares About English Usage?* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2000) [ISBN 9780140289510]. Lucid, non-dogmatic essays on popular issues regarding the use of English.

Downing, A. and P. Locke *A University Course in English Grammar*. (London: Routledge, 2002) [ISBN 9780415288101].

Penhallurick, R. *Studying the English Language*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003) [ISBN 9780333727409].

Wray, A. et al. *Projects in Linguistics*. (London: Hodder, 2006) [ISBN 9780340905784].

### **Books on essay writing and study skills**

Chambers, E and A. Northedge *The Arts Good Study Guide*. (Milton Keynes: The Open University, 1997) [ISBN 9780749287450].

Cottrell, S. *The Study Skills Handbook*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008) third edition [ISBN 9780230573055].

Dunleavy, P. *Studying for a Degree in the Humanities and Social Sciences*. (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1986) [ISBN 9780333418420]. An excellent introduction to general study skills for degree-level work.

Greetham, B. *How to Write Better Essays*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008) second edition [ISBN 9780340905784].

\*Hutchinson, H. *Teach Yourself Writing Essays and Dissertations*. (London: Hodder, 2007) [ISBN 9780340958780]. An excellent introduction to writing essays and preparing for examinations at degree-level.

Peck, J. and M. Coyle *The Student's Guide to Writing*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005) second edition [ISBN 9781403997388].

### **Reading and buying books**

You will almost certainly want to own personal copies of many of the novels, plays and collections of poems prescribed in individual courses, as well as some or all of the books listed above. The subject guides for each course advise you on other texts it is recommended that you buy, as well as others, again, which you will need slightly less and which you might therefore consult in a library. Don't forget that all International Programmes students have access to the University of London's Online Library, where you'll find a good range of secondary material. Please see p.44 for more information.

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Many of the books you buy will be those recommended in lists provided in the subject guides and other study materials; if you are unable to buy all the prescribed works, it is likely that you will primarily select asterisked ones. But in order to develop your individual interests, you will also want to consider other possible purchases, and to develop independent judgment in assessing how useful a book will be to a topic you are studying. For this reason, we make some preliminary suggestions in this section about different sorts of books, and what to look for as you choose between them.

The prescribed texts can usually be bought fairly cheaply in paperback editions (though you should make an initial check that the edition you buy is complete and edited in a responsible way). Often, the introduction contains information about the editing process, so you can easily check whether the edition is suitable. Always look at such editorial introductions – they contain useful information, even if they can look dull by comparison with the rest of the book!

Usually, when you choose an edition of a literary work to buy or consult, you will be concerned with getting as close as possible to what the author of the text (not a later editor or printer) wanted it to be. This means that you should be aware of different editions of the text. It is useful to distinguish between an original edition, a popular reprint and a critical edition. The original edition is the text as it was first printed; most contemporary novels, for example, exist only in original editions. Older texts, however, may also exist in critical editions. A critical edition has a

named editor, who tries to make the text the best possible version, and will usually include footnotes or appendices explaining decisions taken about words in the text. Critical editions are often more reliable versions of the text than original editions, since they will correct accidental errors or random editorial decisions made in the original editions. Older texts are also reprinted in popular editions: a popular edition is a version of a text intended for the general rather than the academic reader.

You can tell whether a text you have is a critical or a popular edition by looking at the following features:

- Does it have a note on the text, explaining spelling conventions used, etc.?
- Does it have an introduction by an editor?
- Does it have footnotes or endnotes?

If the answer to these questions is 'yes', you have a critical edition. Sometimes a popular edition will be based on a critical edition, making it appropriate for most uses. But for study purposes you should avoid illustrated 'coffee table' versions or simplified rewritten editions of a text intended for foreign language learners or for schoolchildren.

Besides these 'primary texts' you will need a number of 'secondary texts', including textbooks and works of criticism. It is best to consult these in libraries before you decide which to buy, as there is no firm consensus about which works will be most useful. Bear in mind that there are enormous numbers of relevant and interesting books that you might buy, and that your finances are almost certainly insufficient to buy all of

them. Many books from earlier periods of research or critical work are, in any case, out of print. In these circumstances, selection is very important. Assess how much you feel you will actually use a book – and for what purposes – before you buy it. In particular, ask yourself how useful its index and table of contents are, so that you can judge how easy it will be to find specific points of information or comment when you need them (e.g. for an essay you are writing).

Perhaps the major problem in choosing critical texts to read and refer to is whether or not to use specialised student textbooks. There is a distinction in principle between a book which sets out original ideas and justifies them (a 'monograph') and a book whose primary function is to explain other people's ideas (a 'textbook'). Textbooks may, of course, also include original ideas, so the distinction becomes blurred (especially where a textbook doesn't tell you where it is presenting contentious interpretations). But developing new arguments is not usually a textbook's main function.

A formulation of an original idea (e.g. in a monograph) is a 'primary source' of that idea; its repetition or paraphrase in a textbook (or in another monograph) is a 'secondary source'. One advantage of secondary sources is that they are often easier to understand. But a problem which can arise is that they may have altered or distorted the original idea. For this reason, it is better to refer at some stage to the primary source of an idea, even if you come across it first in a secondary source. Textbooks are useful (particularly for helping you decide which primary sources to read). But you should not refer to them

very often in writing your final essay. And there is an obvious danger in basing your essay on a single critical work; access to two or three viewpoints will give you a more balanced and independent picture.

Think carefully about what you are looking for when you consult a critical work or textbook. Are you seeking:

- background factual information?
- other people's interpretations of what you are reading (perhaps to reinforce your own, or to reassure you that you are 'on the right track')?
- accepted areas for debate (to narrow down what you think you should say, because of what other people have chosen to talk about)?

Your use of secondary sources needs to be guided by a sense of purpose in your search, as well as by the interest and pleasure of browsing.

It is very difficult to advise on exactly how many books you should buy, because different students have different needs in this respect. But it is likely that you will need an average of possibly three or four secondary works per course, besides the primary texts you have chosen to study in depth. For other primary works, which you propose to read but do not intend to work on closely, you should make full use of any good library to which you have access, including local public libraries (which sometimes have surprisingly useful collections). Remember that your degree programme depends more on what you get out of the books than it does on access to specific editions or rare works. This should not detract from the

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value of bibliographic research, or from your interest in books and editions in and of themselves. Familiarity with libraries, how they work and what they contain, is an important element of all advanced studies (so, increasingly, is familiarity with computers and word-processing, too). But don't be dismayed if books seem difficult to get hold of. You can achieve a lot of interesting and original work based on insights derived from a small number of cheap and widely available editions of major works. Conversely, some students with enviable access to libraries fail to convert those raw materials into relevant insights and arguments.

The library or libraries you use will have staff who can explain to you how to make the most of their facilities. Make sure you ask for this help. The books you need may be listed under different disciplines and stocked in different sections of the library. Make sure you look things up in the catalogue, to find out exactly where the books you need are located. If a book is out on loan, don't give up. Reserve it so it can be recalled for you. Most public and university libraries operate an inter-library loan service: if you cannot get a book you need locally, ask your library if they can get it for you through this service.

Apart from books, you will also find it helpful to read articles in academic journals. These are now widely accessible online, and you can access them through the Online Library (see p.44 for information on the Online Library). Articles can also be obtained in libraries of institutions of higher education or other cultural bodies (such as the British Council). Being short,

articles often give you more distinct ideas and pieces of information per page than books. They are also useful because they are written on specific topics, so you can more easily see if they are what you want. Many scholars have published their most interesting and original work in article rather than book form. It can therefore be useful to photocopy an article from a periodical, so that you have your own copy at home (which you can then write on or highlight). Some students, of course, have far easier access to libraries and photocopiers than others; in general, therefore, we have not made work which is available only in article form central to the prescribed reading for any course.

Make sure you note down the full references for all books and articles you consult in libraries. This is useful as a general record of how your work has progressed, and will build your confidence as regards being familiar with different aspects of the field you are studying. In any case, it is sometimes also necessary to refer specifically to a work in one of your essays – in which case you will be obliged to provide an accurate reference for it. It can waste days going back to a library trying to find an idea or expression that you vaguely remember coming across – perhaps by chance – during an earlier visit.

## **Specialised study techniques**

Finding your book or article is only the beginning, of course. Once you have it in your hands, there are a number of different ways of using it. Because you will often need to read more than you have time to read, you should try to develop ways of reading more quickly and efficiently.

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On each occasion that you begin a book (or article), you should ask yourself what you want from it. This is not only to make sure you select appropriate reading matter; it also helps you to decide how to read. There are various different reading strategies, depending on your objectives and the kind of material you are reading. You can save yourself a lot of wasted time if you bear this in mind.

The most common form of reading is 'sequential'; that is, ploughing through, word for word, from start to finish. This is obviously necessary – and likely to be enjoyable – for prescribed literary works as you need to follow the implication of each detail, each nuance. But in many other circumstances, sequential reading can take up time unnecessarily, and obscure the process of searching out what you are looking for.

The techniques of 'scanning' and 'skimming' can be used to gain a rough idea of what an article or book contains. Scanning involves just looking quickly at each page, to pick out anything that you recognise as being relevant to you, and which you can then read in detail. You scan by looking for key words; and by scanning you develop the skill of quick information retrieval from a larger work. Skimming, on the other hand, involves just reading the first sentence of every paragraph, and anything prominent or highlighted; in this case, it is the general sense and flow of the book you are trying to absorb. Skimming gives you the gist of a longer text, rather than selective, specific pieces of information from it.

Both of these reading techniques are examples of how reading is a selective activity. Even when you read intensively (that is, when you focus on every word), you are still inevitably selective in what you understand or absorb. If you read an article or book twice you will probably be surprised by the many new things you discover the second time. It is a common experience in reading that you read something, then try to write about it; writing about what you have read gives you new ideas, and so when you read the original again you find new things in it because of the new ideas you have brought to it. Experiences of this kind suggest that books or articles which are important to your study should be read more than once (preferably early on, then again later in your study).

Reading is an active process, one where what you bring to it affects what you get out of it. The more you know, the more you can understand. So don't go to books passively, expecting simply to absorb and to be informed. Constantly ask yourself: what key questions is reading this book going to help with? As you read through a book or long article, pause after each chapter or section and look back at any notes you have taken. Do they make sense? Do they provide facts or views you can use? Are there particular points you need to go back to, or will need to find out more about? Like most other study skills you develop, critical reading needs to be goal-directed (and so distinguished from other kinds of reading you do); it also needs to be monitored and evaluated, in order to establish – and so consolidate – exactly what it is that you have discovered or absorbed.

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## How to get started with a text you are reading

Simply knowing that ways of reading need to be goal-oriented isn't in itself much help when you find yourself stuck trying to make sense of something.

To help you get started, therefore, it can be helpful to ask yourself the following questions about the passage or work (more detailed ideas on this general procedure can be found in the *Approaches to text* Foundation course subject guide):

- Who is the speaker? What sort of person (or creature) appears to be speaking in the text? How do we know? What words, phrases or markers of attitude indicate this? Is it the speaker's own point of view which is being given?
  - Who does the passage seem to be addressing? Who (or what sort of audience) must the implied addressee(s) be, so far as we can tell from the passage itself?
  - What theme or general issue is the passage concerned with? How far is a specific attitude taken towards that theme (which may be anything from a conventional topic, such as lost love, to an apparently unresolvable philosophical question, such as the meaning of life)?
  - What is the overall function or effect of the passage? Does it seek to persuade, command, inform, satirise, impress, amuse?
  - How would you describe the style of the passage? Is it colloquial, elevated, ornate, comic, ironic, archaic, conventionally poetic? Which particular words or phrases indicate this most clearly?
- Are there any noticeable changes of mood (or direction in the narrative, if there is one)? Does the passage switch from one style to another, and if so, why?
  - How far is the passage supposed to be realistic? Is it just about what it describes, or is it representative of something more general? Does it symbolise a theme or topic that is not itself directly mentioned in the passage? Is it allegorical (i.e. each character or event in the passage stands for something else in a parallel story)?
  - What effect does the passage have on you? And would it be likely to have a significantly different effect on other readers (e.g. readers from a different historical period; a different class; a different country; a different gender or ethnic group)?

There are many aspects of any given passage to describe besides these. But such a checklist of questions can be a helpful prompt if you are faced with a passage and cannot find a place to start. Beginning with these questions is likely to carry you into other, new areas of your own.

The questions listed above are concerned with the immediate possible meanings of the text, and your responses to it. There are also other sorts of more abstract questions that you might then go on to ask, especially about longer passages or works, which are directed towards issues of the text's production, context and reception. These sorts of questions lead you into most of the main areas of a text that you are likely to want to study.

### **Textual questions**

- Does the piece of text you are looking at comprise the whole of the text?
- Does the text exist in only one version, or many different versions? If in many versions, are there likely to be significant differences between them (e.g. as regards layout, typeface)?
- Has the text been cut, edited or expurgated?
- Has the text been annotated? If so, who provided the annotations, and do the annotations direct you towards a particular way of looking at the text?

### **Contextual questions**

- Was the originator of the text (author or producer) male or female? Professional or amateur? Native speaker of English or non-native speaker?
- How old was she/he when the text was produced?
- Who was the text originally aimed at? Are you part of that expected or anticipated readership or audience?
- When, where and in what circumstances was the text written or produced?

### **Referential questions**

- Does the text contain quotations?
- Does the text refer to particular social attitudes, facts or suppositions about the world, or to particular interests or geographical knowledge?
- Does the text contain specific references to other literary, media, historical, mythological or religious texts, figures or events? If so, do you

know what these references allude to? Would it be helpful to understand the precise meanings of the references, or merely their general origin and flavour?

### **Language questions**

- Is the text in its original language, or a translation?
- Is it likely that all the words in the text mean what you think they mean? (Many words have changed their meanings, and may mean something different now to what they meant in the past.)
- What sort of vocabulary do the words of the text generally come from (Latin or Germanic; elevated or colloquial; technical or non-technical)? Were all the words and structures current at the time the text was written, or is it possible that some (e.g. 'thou') are archaisms?
- Are the sentences generally of the same length and complexity? If not, is the inequality patterned in any way that might be significant?
- Is a very 'literary' language being used?

### **Symbolic questions**

- Do names used in the text refer to unique, particular individuals, or are they representative, standing for general characters or character-types?
- Is it appropriate to look for symbolic meanings of the places (mountains, sea), weather or events (marriage, travel) in the text?
- Is the text intended to relate a specific set of events, or does it function

allegorically, representing one set of concerns in the form of a story about another?

- Is the text's title a key to its meaning?

### Questions of convention

- Should the way you regard the text be guided by conventions about the sort of text it is (e.g. satire, pantomime, sitcom)?
- How realistic do you expect the text to be?

### Questions of representation

- Is the text typical in terms of how it represents its selected themes, or is it significantly different from other treatments of similar concerns?
- Does the text create images of race, women, industry, money and other socially central themes? If so, are these images problematic, and if so, why?

As you ask questions of these different sorts, your attention is likely to be drawn towards particular details of the text. Such details should then stimulate fresh directions for enquiry. Also, your answers to such questions – even provisional or negative answers – are likely to be accompanied by informal kinds of reason or explanation, based on intuitions you have about the text's language, or about how it relates to other texts you are familiar with. (This is especially likely to be the case in respect of questions which begin with 'why'.) Try to get those explanations as clear as possible in your mind; write them down. Patterns of intuition and justification form miniature critical arguments which can be linked together into larger interpretative or

critical responses and used later in different forms.

Generally, asking these sorts of questions of a text you are reading establishes that you already have a wide range of intuitions about virtually any text you look at. You hardly ever start with a completely blank mind, even if it seems that way.

### Note-taking

As with deciding on exactly how you are going to read a particular book or article, it is important to work out what your purpose is in taking notes. Do you want a reminder of all the main points made? Do you want a detailed synopsis for your records (if so, why)? Or do you just want to pick out ideas of particular interest, to help with an idea of your own that is gradually forming in your mind (e.g. for an essay)?

When taking notes about a prescribed literary text, it is not usually worthwhile to produce a summary of the whole work. If you own a personal copy of the work, and don't mind marking it, then underlining or highlighting passages is likely to be quicker and just as useful. It will probably be more useful, in fact, since you will also have the surrounding context available if you decide to refer to the passage again. Similarly, writing out lists of quotations – unless you also indicate what they are supposed to illustrate – tends to be a waste of time.

When taking notes on your critical reading, the most useful notes are likely to be those which remind you of interesting facts or ideas that you would like to follow up elsewhere, or which you may cite in your own essay or examination answer. You need to remember, of course, that your notes

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won't, in this case, represent an accurate record or overview of the work you have read. But so long as you remember this, it is unlikely to be a problem.

Sometimes it can be useful to note down points in an argument that you especially disagree with. These can be useful either in constructing an image of a point of view, which you wish to acknowledge but distance yourself from in an essay, or it may be that your feelings about the idea serve as a catalyst, enabling you to understand better exactly what your own thoughts on the issue are. Naturally, you need to distinguish between ideas you are noting in order to disagree with and those you are noting to agree with, but usually such ideas are readily identifiable, even out of context. The importance of recording which sort of idea is which, lies in the possibility that you might cite the idea at a later point only to discover that it was your own idea prompted by the work rather than an idea contained in the work itself.

The general value of writing notes is to have a reminder of facts and thoughts that can be consulted quickly. So it is important to set your notes out in a way that is visually easy to access. Exactly how you do this depends on your own preferences. But it can be counter-productive to try to save money by writing everything small, and on both sides of the paper; such notes can become completely unusable and are therefore not worth writing in the first place.

Don't be lulled into believing that the only notes you will need to take will be made in the library, when you are 'on duty'. For many people, the best ideas come to mind when they are reading something else,

or doing something entirely unrelated to study (listening to music, walking, gardening). Write such ideas down at the time – even if they seem particularly vivid and unforgettable – as you may otherwise lose them. Such notes may consist of things you realise you need to consult or find out, or simply flashes of ideas or connections regarding a particular topic you have been thinking about earlier.

Having compiled notes, you will need to keep them in a safe place and in a convenient order; notes are only any good if they can be easily consulted. It doesn't matter what system you use (e.g. classification by author or by topic; stored on neat file cards or old bits of paper); all that matters is that you understand and can use your own system, and that you feel comfortable with it.

## Evaluating your progress

Different learning objectives implicit in different kinds of work are, as we have suggested above, often mixed together in the topics you are given to study. So we need to ask the question: if what you need to do is not clearly signposted and identified for you, how can you evaluate the progress you are making?

One challenge of your study lies in identifying for yourself – through a process of self-evaluation – the different things you are learning as you read any given book or extract, or from writing a particular essay. As you progress through your English programme, you will need to devise learning objectives for yourself within the general aims of the courses you are taking, linking these to the more

general aims of that course. You can then read individual works in ways directed towards those objectives. Sometimes this will mean reading a whole work, as you might for general interest or pleasure. On other occasions it might involve scanning a work for examples of some particular feature you are interested in (such as personal intrusions by a narrator in a novel, or indications of who the speaker is in a lyrical poem). At the same time, you will consciously need to work on ways of connecting ideas developed in relation to one given course of the programme with an emerging pattern of work created by the overall curriculum you are following.

As well as monitoring the marks you are given for examination scripts you have written, you also need to evaluate your progress in other, less formal ways, where no pre-given set of attainment targets or criteria exists. To evaluate such aspects of your own work, you need first to define the goals of that particular phase or topic. At the start of a topic or course, therefore, write a list of the various goals you hope to have achieved by the end of it. (Some of these will coincide with objectives suggested in the subject guides; others will be more personal.) When you get to the end of the topic or course in question, ask yourself which of those goals you have successfully achieved. If you have not attained a certain goal, ask again whether the expectation was realistic, and whether you still find that goal important. If so, try to work out what may have gone wrong, and how you might overcome that problem while pursuing the same objective on another occasion. Also ask yourself, however, whether you have in

fact achieved anything significant that was not in your original list of goals; the programme may have made you aware of skills you had not recognised previously. You may well find at the end of the subject that you can revise your estimate of your own talents. Self-evaluation is not an exercise in masochism but in confidence-building, and discovering unexpected talents compensates for feeling that you have failed to reach one or more of your other personal targets.

## The Student Portal

The address of the Student Portal is:

<http://my.londoninternational.ac.uk>

The Portal is a website that gives you access to online resources that are relevant to you and your programme of study. All you need is the one username and password to access all these resources.

You will be sent your Portal username and password with your study materials. We recommend that you log in as soon as you can.

Once you are logged in you will be able to access:

- your VLE
- your Online Library resources
- your student email account
- your user details
- other useful information
- e-seminars (subject to an additional fee)
- essay marking scheme – submission point for practice essays (subject to an additional fee).

If you have not received your username and password or require further assistance logging in, please go to:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current\\_students/portal/help/loginhelp.shtml](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current_students/portal/help/loginhelp.shtml)

### What is the 'Moodle' English VLE?

The 'Moodle' English VLE is a dedicated online space, specifically for BA/Diploma in English students.

The VLE contains:

- latest editions of the subject guides
- discussion forums for each module
- a general discussion forum
- e-seminars on specific topics (for an additional fee)
- essay marking scheme registration (for an additional fee)
- examination papers and reports
- programme Regulations
- student *handbook*.

### How can I communicate with other students?

The VLE provides **four** opportunities:

- the 'student cafe'; a general forum
- the discussion forums for each module
- the e-seminars (for an additional fee – **these are moderated by a tutor**)
- the 'online users' section, which facilitates live chat.

## The Online Library

An Online Library has been developed for International Programmes students. There is an individual homepage for each qualification within the University of London International Programmes.

The Online Library homepage for your programme is:

[www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/res/subjects/index.php?group=eng](http://www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/res/subjects/index.php?group=eng)

To access the Online Library from inside the Portal, click on the 'Online Library' tab.

### Online Library Tour

To help you to find your way around the Online Library it will be useful for you to take the Online Library Tour:

[www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/help/tour.php](http://www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/help/tour.php)

The tour should only take you five minutes to complete but will save you a lot of time in the future.

### Databases and electronic journals

The Online Library provides access to a wide variety of databases, many of which contain full-text electronic journals and e-books. You can browse or search the full list of the Online Library's databases from the databases page:

[www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/res/databases.php?id=eng](http://www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/res/databases.php?id=eng)

Here are some of the major databases that the Online Library provides:

- **Academic Search Complete** – Updated daily, Academic Search Complete is a multi-disciplinary database with full text coverage of 7,900 full-text periodicals, including more than 6,800 peer-reviewed journals.
- **Dawson's E-book Collection** – The Online Library has purchased several core textbooks in electronic format, and the collection is constantly growing.

- **JSTOR** – Full-text journals across a broad range of subject areas including English literature, classical studies, economics, education, finance, history, mathematics, political science, sociology and statistics.
- **Lexis®Library** – although primarily a database containing full-text case law and legislation for the United Kingdom, USA (Federal and State), EU and other jurisdictions, it also provides access to national and local United Kingdom newspapers.
- **Web of Knowledge** – ISI Web of Knowledge delivers easy access to high quality scholarly information in the sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities. This includes free access to My EndNote Web reference management.

The Online Library Team has developed introductory or **Quick Start Guides** for each of the databases to help you learn to use them effectively:

[www.external.shl.london.ac.uk/pdf](http://www.external.shl.london.ac.uk/pdf)

### Summon

Summon is the new Online Library Google-like search engine that provides fast, relevancy-ranked results through a single search box. Use Summon to find the full text of journal articles by typing the article title into the Summon search box. To find out more about Summon go here.

<http://www.external.shl.london.ac.uk/summon/about.php>

If you are interested in a particular journal use the Full Text Electronic Journal List.

<http://zk6qc5fe9p.search.serialssolutions.com/>

### Passwords for accessing the Online Library

Together with your study materials, you will receive a letter with your Portal username and password. With this same username and password, you will be able to access most e-journals and library databases. This means that you only need one password for the Portal, VLE and most Online Library databases.

To access the Online Library, log in to the Portal and then select the 'Library' tab. A new window will take you to the English Online Library gateway. The 'Databases' link will take you to a list of databases relevant to your programme. There is a login guide next to each database link to help you with the login procedure. You will find further information about accessing the Online Library databases at: [www.external.shl.london.ac.uk/help/databases](http://www.external.shl.london.ac.uk/help/databases)

### Support for using the Library

You can send your enquiries by email to the generic University support email: [uolia.support@london.ac.uk](mailto:uolia.support@london.ac.uk); and a specialist librarian will get back to you within two working days.

Enquiries can also be sent by filling in a web form found at:

[www.external.shl.london.ac.uk/help/enquiries/index.php](http://www.external.shl.london.ac.uk/help/enquiries/index.php)

or by telephone: +44 (0) 20 7862 8478.

The Online Library Team, in London, is available between 09.00 and 17.00 (GMT) Monday to Friday.

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You may also be able to find the information you need instantly at the Online Library Help Desk:

[www.external.shl.london.ac.uk/help](http://www.external.shl.london.ac.uk/help)

If you would like to suggest a resource or have any ideas as to how the Online Library can be improved, please let the Online Library Team know:

[www.external.shl.london.ac.uk/contact](http://www.external.shl.london.ac.uk/contact)

## Internet access and computer requirements

In order to take advantage of the benefits of the Portal, as well as to keep up to date with the news and information about English programmes, all English students should have access to a computer with an internet connection. The specifications that we recommend are listed below. As well as improving access to information and study resources, the website and VLE can also help you feel part of the English student community.

### Computer requirements

To use the Portal and the online resources it provides, you will need:

- A computer with internet access
- A web browser – Internet Explorer 6.0 or later, or Firefox 2.0 or later
- Javascript enabled
- Cookies enabled
- Adobe Reader (to download study resources and help material)
- Macromedia Flash Player 7.0 or later (recommended to view movies).

As with all websites, the higher the bandwidth of your internet connection, the smoother your experience of the Portal will be.

## Support

If you require any help accessing your Portal, please see the FAQs:

[www.londonexternal.ac.uk/current\\_students/portal/help/loginhelp.shtml](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/current_students/portal/help/loginhelp.shtml)

(This link can also be found at the bottom of the Portal login page.)

For any other queries, please go to:

[www.londonexternal.ac.uk/current\\_students/portal/help/contact\\_support.shtml](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/current_students/portal/help/contact_support.shtml)

We will try to respond to your query within two working days; however, this may be longer during busy periods and holidays.

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# Examination preparation and answering examination questions

Faced with a writing assignment of any kind, some students feel almost defeated – even before they start. Sometimes, people even think that there are just good writers and bad writers. It is certainly the case that the quality of essays is to some extent affected by personal aptitude and enthusiasm. But the process of writing academic essays also involves a distinct set of skills, conventions and methods which can be learned and practised. There are also established strategies for avoiding many of the pitfalls. By spending some time exploring the rules and methods of essay writing, therefore, and by monitoring closely your own work-in-progress, you should be able to improve your effectiveness in presenting ideas and arguments. This should also improve your chances of achievement and success in your examinations.

You should note, however, that our advice about answering examination questions in this section is not intended to restrict the ways in which you construct your answers (individuality and originality are an important aspect of successful completion of a degree). Rather, the suggestions we offer regarding possible answers provide a 'default' or 'fail-safe' model – something you can fall back on if you feel confused by what is being asked of you, or if you have difficulty in formulating initial ideas for yourself in response to a particular question.

## Assessment of International Programmes students

As you know, International Programmes students are examined to exactly the same standard as students studying at Colleges of the University for the equivalent award, even where, for practical reasons, examination papers may differ in local ways. So, overall you need to attain the same levels of achievement as a full-time student.

Nevertheless, there are slight differences in the mode of assessment between students studying at Colleges of the University and International Programmes students, to which it is worth drawing your attention. The first is that, for practical reasons, courses for International Programmes students are all assessed by examination, rather than by other methods such as projects or dissertations. This has implications for your preparation. Since any coursework you submit before your examination is not formally assessed, you are not governed by any regulation regarding the repetition or duplication of work from coursework essays to examinations. What you write in the examination room will be written for the first time, as far as the University is concerned, so this means you are free to devote much of your preparation time to trying out versions of your ideas before the examination. (This does not free you, of course, from the prohibition on repeating yourself between examination papers: you can't use substantially the same material twice within the degree – see the following notes.)

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## Important notes about the examination

### Notes for Diploma students

Students are **forbidden to discuss the same text in more than one answer on any examination paper.**

There are two important exceptions to this rule:

3. **Renaissance comedy: Shakespeare and Jonson.** In this course, you may write on the same play/s so long as the arguments you make are substantially different, subject to the rubric of the examination paper.
4. **Approaches to text.** You are allowed to draw on reading that you have done for **Explorations in literature** to answer questions on **Approaches to text**, provided that you do not present substantially the same material in more than one answer in this or in any other part of your Diploma examinations.

### Notes for BA English students

**Students are forbidden to discuss the same text in more than one answer on any examination paper.**

**There are two important exceptions to this rule:**

1. If you have studied a text for a Foundation level course, you may study it again for an Advanced level course, **provided** that you are not substantially repeating the same material or treatment of that material. For example, if you have answered a question on 'epic' with reference to *Gawain* in **Explorations in literature 1**, there would be no objection to you

using *Gawain* once more in **Literature of the later Middle Ages** to answer questions on gender or the genre of romance.

2. The other exceptions involve the following individual examinations:
  - a. Foundation level course **Renaissance comedy: Shakespeare and Jonson.** In this course, you may write on the same play/s so long as the arguments you make are substantially different.
  - b. Foundation level course **Approaches to text.** You may draw on reading that you have done for **Explorations in literature** to answer questions on **Approaches to text**, provided that you do not present substantially the same material in more than one answer in this or in any other part of your foundation level course examinations.
  - c. Advanced level course **Shakespeare.** You may offer an answer in Section A on a passage from a play and further discussion of that play in **not more than one answer** in Section B of the examination, provided that you do not present substantially the same material in more than one answer in this or in any other part of your examinations.

**The golden rule for all candidates is to read carefully the rubric for each examination you enter to ensure that you obey the instructions given there.**

Please ensure that you have studied a sufficient breadth of material to be certain that you are in no danger of having to repeat texts.

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**You are strongly advised to keep a record of all the texts you have used for examinations. This record will help you ensure you have read widely and can be confident of adhering to these rules.**

Candidates who discuss the same text more than once, with the exception of those papers identified above, will be severely penalised by the Examiners.

## Past papers

Copies of past papers (where available) and *Examiners' reports* will be included in your study pack. For each examination paper, check how long you will have to write for each answer, and in your revision try to get some practice in writing shorter answers against the clock, under timed conditions. One hour is a very short time in which to present your arguments in response to a given question, so you must become used to marshalling your thoughts, by planning an effective structure, presenting supporting evidence and writing succinctly and to the point within a limited time.

As a way of preparing to write an examination answer, it is helpful to bear in mind that there is only a limited range of possible questions that are likely to be asked about any given topic. In the examination itself, divide up the time on the basis of how the marks are likely to be distributed; if you run out of time for your first answer, quickly sketch a conclusion and move on to the next question, so that you have provided at least a general indication of work in all the questions.

**More marks are typically lost by failing**

**to write one answer altogether than by presenting two or three answers that are slightly weaker than you would have liked. This could be the difference between a pass or a fail.** Keep your paper tidy (for example, by deleting all notes at the end of the examination), but don't take up time using correcting fluid to remove errors (it signifies that you are focusing more on appearance than content).

It is very important that you finish each paper. An incomplete or rushed final answer seriously detracts from an otherwise successful script. Practising short, timed one-hour answers rapidly develops skills that are difficult to acquire by other means, so it is highly recommended.

## Revising for the examinations

You will probably be taking several different courses at a time. In your revision, you will want to keep all of these going along at the same time. During the final few weeks, a revision schedule is recommended, balancing priorities and demands between the various courses and topics you have chosen to work on in detail.

Try to plan your revision schedule in such a way that you are not overtired or exhausted during the three hours of the examination itself. A short break between revision and writing the examination is often desirable. You need to **think** during the examination, not merely remember. And thinking requires physical resources which you need to sustain, so don't neglect appropriate food, drink and rest. If your preparation fails in this respect, and

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you are unwell during the examination, then you will need to get a medical certificate from your doctor and send it in to the International Programmes within three weeks of sitting the examination.

**Without a medical certificate, sent in by the deadline specified, medical problems cannot be considered.** For further information, please see 'Mitigating circumstances' on page 65.

Since you have to answer three questions for **each** course, one of which **in the 'A'** courses is a context question for which you cannot specifically prepare, it is a good idea to revise approximately four authors or topics. In 'A' courses, for each author or topic you are advised to study in detail at least two texts in the case of playwrights or novelists and, in the case of poets, between 12 and 15 poems in detail. (This will, of course, depend on the length of the poems involved; clearly 'Paradise Lost' or 'The Prelude' are not to be treated as single poems. But you should certainly aim to cover in depth a representative range of a poet's work.) This means that you will have two possible topics in reserve, in case a question asked about one of the authors or topics you would like to answer on turns out to be too difficult, or in an area you haven't especially explored. In 'B' courses the pattern is, typically, three authors or topic questions, so you should prepare five authors or topics, to have two reserves. Revising many more texts than this is probably not a good idea, since as an International Programmes student you are almost certain to suffer from lack of time. It is better to know a limited amount of material well than to have superficial understanding of everything in

the syllabus. Work you have undertaken in general preparation for the degree or diploma will be sufficient as background; during your revision, you are trying to draw together strands from your general work into more focused potential arguments and debates.

How much you choose to read again before the examination depends on you: people vary dramatically in this respect. It is unlikely that you will have time to read all the prescribed literary texts again, although this is desirable (since many things tend to drop into place at the last minute). If time is short, skim read the prescribed texts, focusing on passages you have highlighted or underlined. At the very least, this will refamiliarise you with names, allusions and the style; it is also likely to trigger your memory and enable you to recall previous periods of work on the book.

It is not a good idea to prepare model answers to possible examination questions. This is not only because precisely the same questions are unlikely to come up again, it is also because, if you do prepare model answers, you are likely to spend the time in the examination room desperately trying to remember details of your answer, rather than thinking out new ideas. In many cases, students report that this leads to memory block and panic. In any case, there is likely to be a greater sense of engagement with your ideas and material if you are writing an argument which you have genuinely just constructed in the examination room (even if all the information contained in that argument is material you have prepared and remembered from your revision).

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**If it is not a good idea to use model answers, then exactly what can you do to prepare?**

There are two main possibilities.

The first is prepackaged clusters of ideas or, in effect, a 'modular' approach to answers. Many questions will require you to construct some preliminary context for your arguments, and arguments generally require illustration and exemplification as they develop. Material for these purposes can be prepared in advance or 'prepackaged'. Similarly, links between ideas and arguments will also be fairly stable in your thinking, so you can have a preplanned overview of how different questions and aspects of your work are related, even if in your answer you are completely open to the possibility of presenting these relationships from different possible viewpoints. So such an overview of the relationship between different aspects of a text or problem can also be prepared. Such material is then adapted and fitted together in the examination room around the particular question you are asked. But always take care to keep your answer relevant, and avoid introducing material the relevance of which you find it difficult to establish.

The second possibility is the preparation of essay plans or outlines. Use past examination papers as raw material for your revision, by constructing outlines in response to old questions. Study the style of examination questions, to identify how they are formulated in order to direct you towards certain kinds of discussion (but not towards particular answers). You may not actually use the arguments you have

prepared, if appropriate questions do not come up in the examination. But preparing essay outlines forces you into the intellectual discipline of thinking carefully about the implications of points you make, and about putting ideas and arguments into sequences that lead from the question towards a particular conclusion.

## **Managing your time in the examination room**

The first – and perhaps most important – thing to do in the examination room is to read the general instructions at the top of the paper properly. Do not be rushed into your first answer by the pressure of the situation. People throw marks away by answering the wrong number of questions, or the wrong type of questions, or ignoring instructions about the scope of the answer or repetition of material. Such mistakes lead to substantial reductions in marks and have the effect of undermining all the rest of the work you have done.

After carefully reading through the general instructions, you then need to choose your questions. It is often a good idea to choose as your third question one which you find relatively straightforward – since you will be at your most tired when you come to write it. This allows you to concentrate more easily on your first two questions.

Although it may seem possible to write a rough third answer in a few minutes, this is certainly not a good idea. (Marks are generally divided evenly across the paper, with one-third of the marks being available for each of the three answers you are asked to produce.) In your introduction to each answer, it is likely that you will touch

on aspects of the question which you know are important but which you have decided not to go into for reasons of time: this shows (if done convincingly) that you are aware of the range of issues raised, and leaves you free to say something interesting about those limited aspects of the question which you have chosen to discuss in detail. It is better to discuss a limited range of things in depth, rather than rush superficially through everything.

If, despite your planning, you do run out of time, **make sure that you attempt all three questions. An unanswered question will get you a mark of 0, seriously affecting what you have achieved in the other questions as regards an overall mark.** An unfinished question will gain at least some marks, especially if you sketch out where the argument is going, even if you are unable to fill out the detail.

## Planning and writing your examination answers

Examinations in literary studies generally require you to carry out two related tasks:

First, they invite you to show that you are familiar with the basic, raw material which makes up the subject – whether this is a work, a series of works, a literary theory, the historical context of an author or what critics have said about something.

Secondly, they invite you to show that you can manipulate that basic, raw material to argue a case, in ways consistent with established frameworks of literary–critical debate. You have to tailor your knowledge to the demands of the question. The Examiners are interested in seeing how you apply your critical faculties to the

material you have read, when faced with a question about which you haven't had advance warning.

Many students' examination essays demonstrate that the writers know the relevant material; however, the same essays do not always demonstrate this knowledge within a coherent or developing argument. Such essays are usually judged to be lacking a necessary dimension for achieving high marks. So the second task of essay-writing – arguing a case in an appropriate style – is important.

Many of the difficulties that arise in writing an essay are created by a sense of not being able to break down a confusing overall process or experience into distinct elements or stages that can be observed, monitored and so learnt. In particular, writers struggle with the need to control a number of different aspects of organisation at the same time. You need to control:

- the argument, at a conceptual level
- the essay's information structure, to avoid presenting, as if they were new, facts or views likely to be well known to and presupposed by the Examiner
- the discourse structure, so that your essay builds up, and has shape and development
- the style, so that the essay speaks with a voice you are comfortable with (and so that it does not become too repetitive, pompous or colloquial)
- the punctuation and grammar, so that the essay can be read easily, and the presentation, so that the essay can be read clearly, in terms of layout and handwriting.

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In preparing for your examinations, you need to give attention to each of these aspects of essay-writing.

## Getting started

In writing essays, either in examination conditions or as coursework, the biggest problem of all is often how to get started. Very few people actually begin writing with the essay fully formed in every detail in their mind. Try jotting down some ideas, in any sequence, as they occur to you, and later develop them and put them into what seems an appropriate order. Use your knowledge of the text itself, and the precise wording of the question, as a stimulus. It can be good practice, as a way of clarifying your thoughts, to try disagreeing with questions, or making notes in two columns (one agreeing with the question, the other disagreeing). As your ideas come together, you will see complexities and subsidiary points that may need exploring. Sort your initial jottings into a rough plan for the essay, with key words to guide you through, and perhaps with references to points in texts or critical works which exemplify or corroborate what you want to say. Your outline should present you with 'reminders' of the sequence in which the points of your essay should be made, and may also give you your necessary paragraph headings (particularly since an examination essay gives room for only a few paragraphs). Think, too, about the logical relationship between your points: is one point an extension of another? Or a counter-argument or exception to it? When you have juggled your outline around until it presents what you consider to be a plausible case, it should serve as the basis for writing the

essay itself – which now just means joining up your headings with sentences which make explicit what the links between them are.

Remember that the question is probably asking you to carry out a number of different tasks. What you achieve through your outline is a division of one complex task into a series of interrelated smaller, and also simpler, tasks that you need to accomplish. The question is broken down into simpler units which you can address in turn. These might include:

- problems in the formulation of the question – words which need definition or explanation, for example
- established views on the issue raised by the question, which you will have learned about by your own reading
- examples which you can use to illustrate specific points (list the points which each example illustrates)
- crucial technical terms which you need to introduce (e.g. an appropriate vocabulary for describing the rhyme scheme of a poem)
- historical context which needs to be introduced in order to answer a question about a writer from an earlier period.

Establish in your mind the scope and boundaries of the material that will be relevant, bearing in mind the formulation of the question (e.g. 'choose two plays by Shakespeare'). Divide up the time available for the question, so that your answer, though short, is still properly proportioned.

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## Being original

Whatever you write, it should be in some sense original. But 'originality' presents a difficult problem because you are unlikely to be in a position to advance new facts or radically new interpretations, or even to have a wide enough knowledge of what other people have written, to be sure that you aren't duplicating it.

This is especially likely to be the case with examination answers, where you clearly cannot be expected to be 'original' in the sense in which a researcher or expert in the field might be expected to be. But you will nevertheless be expected to be original in the sense of using your own knowledge and independent judgment to argue a case. Your case gains its originality from two main factors: first, the way in which you compare and weigh the different strengths and weaknesses of existing arguments – which you may well need to summarise in your essay, if they are arguments you have come across in published work; and secondly, by choosing different examples from those presented in works you have read or in any lectures you have attended.

Faced with the challenge of being original in this way, some student writers believe that they should copy or adapt other people's work because it is bound to be of better quality than their own. This is inappropriate, because you are generally assessed on relative quality ('good for a foundation-level answer') rather than on absolute quality. Homage to the achievement of established authors, expressed in the form of direct copying, is not an accepted mode of writing essays

or dissertations in British higher education (including in the University of London BA degree); it is considered plagiarism, and is heavily penalised.

The International Programmes employs the use of online plagiarism detection software and your work may be submitted to this online service. The plagiarism detection software will help Examiners identify poor academic practice or potential plagiarism in students' work.

In your examination answers, as in other essays you may write, it is important, therefore, always to identify what is original and what is not. This is not only a matter of showing that you are not stealing or plagiarising other people's work. At least as important is the process of making explicit the argument structure of your essay. By acknowledging sources, you show the foundations for the speculations or conclusions you yourself are adding. If you simply insert other people's material unacknowledged into your own, the danger is also that your writing jumps around and becomes incoherent.

The requirement for originality in your studies has another dimension, too: it can be developmental. You don't learn much by taking other people's ideas for granted, so the prohibition on plagiarism or deference to authority is educationally beneficial too. You are not expected to agree with everything you read, whether in critical works or in the subject guides we ourselves produce. On the contrary, it is an aim of the programme to encourage you to think independently and to develop original ideas by making new connections between the various things you study.

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## Arguing a case

Arguing a case in an examination answer generally involves the following four stages (note, however, that many good essays are written without conforming to this model, so do not feel obliged to follow it – the stages identified here are simply for guidance if you do not feel happy with the ways you have organised essays so far):

### Stage 1

**Task:** identify, comment on general problem(s) raised by question.

**What you have to do:** reformulate question in own words; explain any technical terms.

### Stage 2

**Task:** establish competing points of view on the question or principal point at issue.

**What you have to do:** distinguish points where disagreement or conflicting interpretation seems likely; indicate your mode of analysis and on what basis you will judge between different points of view.

### Stage 3

**Task:** present evidence.

**What you have to do:** develop relevant arguments, with illustrations, in support of (or to compare) various positions you have identified.

### Stage 4

**Task:** draw conclusions.

**What you have to do:** offer a conclusion consistent with evidence you have presented; ensure the conclusion matches the balance of arguments for and against different possibilities as presented in your essay.

To help you devise your essay structure, and, in particular, to assist in the first ‘problem identification’ stage, note the following features of the words used above:

The term ‘discuss’, which is very widely used in examination questions, invites debate, where debate means reasoned presentation of arguments for and against a proposition. The end of your discussion should be a conclusion – no matter how qualified or tentative.

Words like ‘explain’, ‘justify’ and ‘assess’ are used to focus your attention on causation and evidence; you should not only describe what you have read, but also offer an analysis of why you take the view that you do. ‘Give examples’ (or the related, ‘with reference to no less than two texts...’) invites you to present concrete illustrations, which may well include quotation and paraphrase (of episodes or incidents from the text) to support the points you make.

As you write your answer, take particular care with your opening paragraph. Do write a distinct introductory paragraph, but don’t use it as a way to put off answering the question. Instead, use your first paragraph as an opportunity to translate the question into your own words. So don’t use the same wording as in the question throughout your answer, and don’t translate ‘word for word’. Efforts at reformulation and reorganisation will force you to understand the question and show your Examiner that you do. Translate technical words into ordinary language, wherever possible. Where a question seems broad or general, explain how you are interpreting it in order to make it more manageable.

As the answer progresses, take care that you are not simply retelling the story, or merely offering simple character sketches. Rather, what is required is analysis, which

involves breaking down a body of material or ideas into component parts, in order to see what it is made of. Relatedly, critical thinking involves questioning why things are the way they are, and working from the premise that things can always be otherwise (choices have been made): a sentence could have been constructed differently, the plot might have ended in a different way, etc. Your task in critically analysing a text, therefore, largely involves explaining and commenting on the underlying choices made in its construction, not simply describing the outcomes of such choices – the way the text finally is.

Your answer will be given additional depth and interest if you can give attention (as appropriate) to problems in analysis or interpretation, as well as to underlying general ideas or theories, existing traditions and influences, parallels or contrasts. Following the sequence of ideas in your argument, not of the events in the poem or the story, is the key to organising the essay.

## The style of your essay

Your examination answers will need to adopt an academic 'register', or style, of English. In general, you achieve this by discussing your subject matter while avoiding colloquialisms and contractions, yet at the same time not being pompous or technical. Judgments of what is 'pompous' or 'technical' will vary from person to person, and you will need to use your own standards, but a good way of practising is to rewrite one of your preparatory essays in different styles, trying to make one version as colloquial as

possible, another as pompous as possible, etc., while preserving the same content. This will show up some obvious markers of style, and suggest ways of finding a voice you feel comfortable with.

Who do you address your essay to? An authority in the field? Or someone who knows nothing at all about it and needs to be told? In examinations, you should assume that your addressee is someone who is intelligent and understands the subject (so don't patronise or talk down), but who needs to be reminded of things (this shows that you know them, too). Don't state the obvious (rather, allude to it in passing, as a shared piece of information, or reminder). It is also a good idea to avoid talking about yourself or commenting directly on the examination unless you are explicitly asked to, so avoid comments of the kind, 'I had difficulty in discussing this aspect of the text in the time available...'.  
Avoid bias in the language you use, too. 'Biased language' is language which favours one group of the population at the expense of another.

If you refer to 'the reader' as 'he', for instance, you have chosen to use this as what is called a 'generic', to mean 'male or female' (since you don't know whether the reader is male or female); this use overrides the normal use of 'his' as a gender-specific pronoun meaning 'male'. While use of 'he' in this way used to be common practice, it is now widely considered sexist. Such usage represents the masculine as the norm, and so marginalises women (by creating the impression that educated discussion

of literature takes place only among men). There are various alternatives to traditional, 'generic' usage. Both male and female pronouns can be used: 'his or her', or, since there is no particular reason to put 'his' first, 'her or his'. Or you can rewrite the sentence so that the plural pronoun is used, 'readers...they'. Or you can use 's/he' and 'her/his' to replace 'he and/or she'. Or you can use 'she' as a generic, directly challenging the older use of 'he'.

The second major way of expressing bias is in the use of names for groups of people. The false generic 'man/mankind' should be replaced by 'people', 'humankind', etc. And further bias against women is expressed by referring to adult women as 'girls'. Relatedly, you should avoid terms such as 'poetess', 'actress', 'lady novelist', etc., which are all asymmetrical with the male-counterpart term ('poet', 'actor', etc.). Lists of names of authors should not be differentiated according to gender, by using given names for women writers but only family names for men writers (as in Shakespeare, Milton, Jane Austen, Hardy). Be consistent in whatever listing convention you choose.

While bias against women is perhaps the most thorough form of bias in language, it is important to recognise and try to remove bias against other marginalised groups. In general, groups of people must be allowed to choose their own names. No group of people chooses to call itself 'Red Indians' or 'Negroes', so you should avoid these terms; 'coloured' is generally considered unacceptable by people to whom it is applied, etc. Naming groups of people is an extremely complex

issue, which is dependent on the political orientations of the people involved and on rapid changes in nuance and connotation. But you must exercise care. You cannot simply opt out of the issue altogether: whatever choice you make in this area will have a meaning and give a signal.

## Paragraphs

An examination essay is written in an hour, so it cannot be very long. It may cover four A4 sides (about 1,200 words) and might well be divided into about eight paragraphs. Too few paragraphs can make the essay difficult to follow, both visually and conceptually, and suggests that it may not have an underlying argument structure at all. If the paragraphs are consistently very short, on the other hand (e.g. just one or two sentences), then the subdivisions being made become too complicated for a more general, structural image of the essay to be seen, and this defeats the point of having paragraphs at all. In general, a paragraph should have several sentences, and might cover about half a page of A4 (about 100 to 150 words).

Each paragraph brings together your comments about a topic within the structure of your essay (so each paragraph is likely to coincide with a heading in your initial outline). It is usual for each paragraph to begin with a general sentence, indicating what the paragraph contains and also how it links back to what you have said in the previous paragraph. Subsequent sentences typically extend the general statement with which you begin, or illustrate it, or qualify it in some way (e.g. by indicating difficulties which exist with it, or reservations you feel about it).

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The paragraph typically ends either when it is clear that what you propose to say next addresses a distinct and different topic, or else with a sentence which sums up what you have said in the preceding sentences. To check your use of paragraphs, try reading through an essay you have written, reading only the first sentence of each paragraph: does the essay still loosely make sense in this form? If it doesn't, look more closely at how your paragraphs are constructed, to see if they are genuinely 'blocks' of material making up a developing argument.

## Examples and quotations

The question may not tell you to give examples, but you always should, and you should show how the examples relate to your answer. Use quotations if you know some. But in answering a question in an examination – unlike writing an essay where you have books in front of you – you are not expected to quote texts extensively (paraphrase is generally enough) or to give full bibliographical references for your sources. You should nevertheless acknowledge the name of any critic you either cite directly or borrow from extensively.

In writing a literary essay, you are quite likely at some point to want to incorporate someone else's words. This is not only because quotation contributes to an appropriate 'literary-critical' register (for this dubious reason, quotations are often believed to be 'compulsory in essays', even in examinations); it is also because your essays are largely about language (both the language of the literary texts you are analysing, and also the language of critical

works about them), so quotation is an important way of presenting data.

You can either quote or paraphrase literary texts, and the same is true of critical analyses. A paraphrase usually substantially changes the language of the original, because all that matters is that the idea is conveyed. Normally you would paraphrase rather than quote, because this is a way of rewriting the relevant material in a way which assimilates it into your essay (rather than, like a quotation, leaving it sticking out because of its different style). But you should use a quotation where the language of the original is itself important. When you put a quotation in your essay, you should do several things with it:

- Identify where the quotation comes from (e.g. the author and work).
- Tell the reader something about the context from which the quotation was taken, to indicate the background against which the quotation is being used.
- Add a commentary or gloss, clarifying the relevance of the quotation to your argument. Since quoted material can be read in many different ways, you need to ensure that the particular contribution the quotation makes to your argument is made explicit. Take special care in this respect with long quoted passages (more than a couple of sentences or more than a few lines of a poem), even if you can remember them. A lengthy quotation which is not then followed by detailed analysis and discussion is often one being used illegitimately as a way of replacing rather than supporting an argument;

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you should guide your readers through the significance of what you have selected for their attention. You don't get marks for remembering quotations, only for using them effectively.

Literary essays typically follow a simple set of conventions governing the presentation of quotations. In general, short quotations in prose (up to about 40 to 50 words) are incorporated into the body of the text, enclosed within single quotation marks. Some systems recommend double quotation marks; either will be acceptable, so long as you are consistent. Longer prose quotations are indented, as a block, about half an inch (1cm) from the left margin of the rest of the text, and should not have quotation marks. Quotations in verse should be indented, like long quotations, and laid out as closely as possible to the original.

All quoted material should follow the spelling and punctuation of the source edition. If you omit words from a quotation, indicate the omission by the use of ellipsis (= three full stops), allowing a blank space on either side. Any editorial insertions you make within a quotation should be enclosed within square brackets [ ].

It is generally enough in undergraduate essays and examinations just to put the author's name, then the title of the work, then the publisher and date in brackets.

Remember, though, that names of books, journals and long poems should always be underlined; names of articles, short poems and essays should be enclosed by inverted commas.

In the work you do for your degree, it is not especially important precisely which style you use to present references; what matters is that you are consistent. Although they are important, you should not let technicalities in presenting references divert you away from the crucial tasks of organising and writing your essay. Bear in mind that presentational matters are for the convenience of your reader, who will want to be able to check easily on the materials you have used. They contribute to, but do not in themselves constitute, a good essay.

## Your conclusion to an essay

The question may not directly ask you for a conclusion, but give one anyway. Your reader will pay particular attention to your last paragraph and last sentence, largely because the last section has to bring to a suitable conclusion the various different arguments you have made. 'A suitable conclusion' does not mean just repeating your opening sentence.

So what, then, would a 'suitable conclusion' be like? This depends on the aims of the essay, but might include:

- a judgment about which of the competing arguments you have considered in your essay is correct or most persuasive
- an evaluation or assessment of the qualities of a work or writer, based on arguments presented in the essay
- an indication of consequences which follow from what you have shown in your essay.

- If you want to suggest consequences or implications, try ending by answering these questions:
- Does your argument suggest that we should look again at some other area, which we might now view differently?
- Can you generalise what you have said to other works by the same author, by other authors, or to other works of the same period?
- Can you make any important general observations, using your whole essay as an illustration or case study?

Your essay is an argument, and you should present different sides of that argument. It is this argument which your first paragraph promises and to which your last paragraph offers a conclusion. Your conclusion can properly come to a decision on one side, and need not remain totally balanced. It is perfectly acceptable to draw conclusions of your own, based on arguments and evidence you have presented. The challenge is to show that you have answered the question but have got there by fair consideration of all positions.

## Checking what you have written

After finishing each essay, especially in your revision (where you have the opportunity to learn from shortcomings in what you have written), go through it, checking the following:

- Does each paragraph start by clearly identifying what issue is going to be discussed? (If you can't identify what issue is being discussed, something is wrong!)
- Does each paragraph discuss only one issue? (If not, divide it into more than one paragraph unless there is a good reason not to do so.)
- Do you discuss the same issue in more than one paragraph? (If so, put these discussions together, unless there is a clear distinction between the treatment in the two paragraphs – in which case, you need to spell that out.)
- Do you say things at different points in the essay which are mutually contradictory? (If so, sort this out!)
- Spelling, as a separate process, and check for errors created by writing quickly.
- Punctuation – punctuate in order to assist your reader.

# Entering for examinations



The following pages aim to guide you through the examination process, from making an examination entry through to receiving your results. Remember, you do not have to take examinations each year, but if you decide to sit, they are usually held in May–June.

## Examination Centres

Maintaining a good relationship between yourself and your Examination Centre is a very important part of the examination process and will ensure the process runs smoothly for you.

Firstly, you should contact one of the approved Examination Centres, listed online:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams)

If you do not have access to the internet, please contact the Student Assessment Office (see Contacts pages).

We would advise you to do this in good time as your Examination Centre will need to countersign your examination entry form before you can send it to the University in London. The deadline for the University to receive examination entries is 1 February. Your Examination Centre's local deadline will therefore be before this date, so always make sure you have submitted your examination entry form in time.

The Examination Centre will charge you a fee to cover the costs of accommodation, invigilation and the return of your script(s) to the University by courier. This local fee should be paid direct to the Examination Centre where you sit your examinations and is in addition to the examination entry fee you pay to the University in London.

## New codes

**Note that course/module codes are new from the 2011–2012 academic year and replace any previous year's examination numbers. This change does not affect the syllabus or content of the course/module.**

**The new code for each course/module is shown next to the course title in Annex A and Annex B of the Programme Specification and Regulations. For a table showing how old examination numbers are replaced by new course/module codes, see the University of London International Programmes website:**

**[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/new\\_codes](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/new_codes)**

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Examination Centres are all independent institutions responsible for conducting the examinations at a local level. Each Centre will individually set its own local deadline for receiving your examination entry form and will decide what local fee it will charge you to cover the costs of accommodation, invigilation and the return of your script(s) to the University by courier. It is important to note that the University has no influence over the exchange rate or the amount of the fee charged by the Examination Centre. This amount can vary significantly from country to country so please check with your Centre directly. At the examination session, all students will be examined by the same written paper examination, on the same date and at the same time. In certain circumstances, however, this may not be possible, so you should always check with the Examination Centre that you have the correct time and location of your examinations.

It is important that your Examination Centre can easily contact you, so always make sure they (as well as the Student Assessment Office in London) have your main current contact address, especially if you change addresses. Always check the details (for example, examination location, time and date) with the Centre directly and if you are unable to attend an examination, please let them know.

Students who have difficulty in making arrangements to take examinations at any of the listed Examination Centres, or who wish to take examinations in a country not listed, should write to the Student Assessment Office (see Contacts pages). You should note, however, that where an

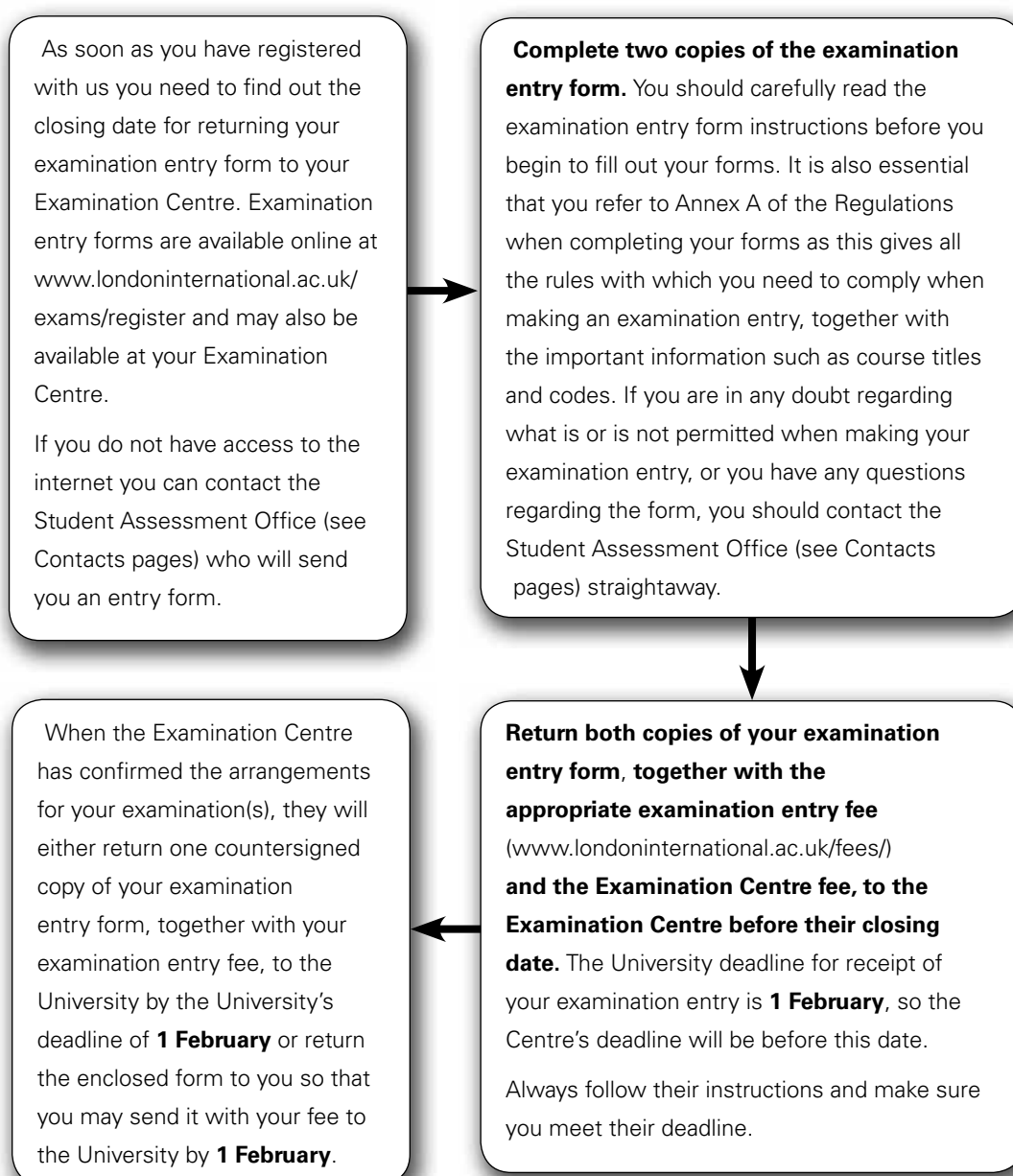
established Examination Centre exists, you will be expected to use the facilities provided by that Centre. The University is not able to establish an alternative Examination Centre in an area where one is already established.

### **HM Forces overseas and HM Ships**

If you are serving and want to take examinations where you are based you should contact the Examinations Office in London.

## Making an examination entry

The following diagram will guide you through the process for making an examination entry:



### Please remember:

The University deadline for receipt of your completed and countersigned examination entry is **1 February**.

You must ensure that your entry is submitted in time to be received by this date.

In exceptional circumstances, entries received after **1 February** will be accepted only at the discretion of the University.

### London entry:

The Student Assessment Office makes the arrangements for London examinations.

You should return one copy of the examination entry form with the appropriate entry fee if applicable to the Student Assessment Office by the deadline.

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## Changing your address

If, after submission of your examination entry form you change your address, please let us know as soon as possible either by email, letter or using the Change of details form at the back of this *handbook*. If you are based overseas you should also inform your Examination Centre.

## Special examination arrangements

You should write to the Special Needs Coordinator department (see Contacts pages) at the same time as you submit your examination entry to confirm any special examination arrangements that you require and to submit any required medical documentation. This will allow us to make the arrangements in good time for your examinations. For full information relating to our Inclusive practice policy, please see the General section of this *handbook*.

## The examination timetable

The examination session is held in May–June each year and you should keep this in mind when making plans such as, for example, booking holidays. We can only prepare the detailed examination timetable once all examination entry forms have been processed at the University; however, advance timetables for most programmes are available from early January. It must be noted, however, that dates in the advance timetable are subject to change if, for example, we discover an examination clash. For the majority of papers the timetabling of examinations can only be confirmed in the last week of March.

## Examination Admissions Notice

We will send you an Examination Admissions Notice two weeks before the examination session begins. This Notice provides important information relating to your examinations, including the examinations for which you are entered and the specified dates and times on which you will sit these examinations. If you do not wish to miss the opportunity to sit, it is vital that you make sure that you are able to take the examinations on the dates given on your Admissions Notice. No adjustment can be made to the dates on this Notice for any reason.

The Admissions Notice also includes an information sheet explaining examination conduct and the rules applying to your examination. It is an important document and you should read it carefully when it arrives.

The Admissions Notice must be taken into every examination to provide the invigilators with proof of your identity.

If you are sitting your examinations in the United Kingdom, your Admissions Notice will be sent to you at the contact address we have on our records approximately four weeks before the examination session commences. If you are entered to sit examinations outside the United Kingdom, your Admissions Notice will be sent to your Overseas Examination Centre approximately four weeks before the examination period commences. You can then either collect the Notice from the Centre or they will forward it to you at your contact address.

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If you have not received your Admissions Notice two weeks before the start of your examinations you must immediately contact the Student Assessment Office (see Contacts pages) if you are sitting in the United Kingdom or Republic of Ireland, or your Examination Centre if you are sitting overseas.

## Sitting your examination

If, once you have made an examination entry, you change your mind and decide you are not ready to sit your examination, you will not be penalised academically for doing so. You must be aware, however, that **examination entry fees are not refundable, nor can they be transferred under any circumstances if you decide not to sit. Please keep this in mind when you make your entry to the examination.**

If you are absent from **all** of the examination papers, for whatever reason, you do not need to inform us. However, if you are absent from one or two examination papers only, **you must write to us immediately**, giving the reasons that prevented you from sitting your examinations. If these reasons are of a medical nature, you will also need to enclose a medical report with your letter. Please also inform your Examination Centre.

## Mitigating circumstances

If you think your examination performance was adversely affected by illness or other adequate cause, either during or directly before the examination session, then you must contact the Student Assessment Office ([external.exams@](mailto:external.exams@london.ac.uk)

[london.ac.uk](mailto:london.ac.uk)) straightaway and include a full medical report and/or other supporting documentation. This information must be submitted no more than three weeks after the date of your last examination so that it can be taken into account by the Examiners.

If you have difficulty obtaining your supporting evidence you should still write to the Student Assessment Office within the time specified above, but explain fully the reason why you cannot provide the supporting documentation at that time.

You should also say when you expect to forward this information to the University. The University can only consider your case if you provide us with appropriate supporting evidence.

## Receiving your examination results

Results are available initially online and you will be sent an email informing you when they are available. In addition, paper copies will be despatched to your main contact address later. It is important that you ensure your contact address is up to date (see Changing your address). You should also make sure you inform your Examination Centre of any change of address and contact details.

If you have not received a paper copy of your results by the beginning of September for the May examinations, you should contact the Student Assessment Office (see Contacts pages).

Please can we ask you to be patient and not contact us before that time. We will do all we can to get your examination results to you as quickly as possible.

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## Administrative recheck of examination results

If, when you receive your notification of result, you are concerned that an administrative error may have been made in the calculation of your result, you should contact Administrative recheck of results (see Contacts pages).

Before making a request against your result it is important for you to be aware that you can only make a representation on administrative grounds. Rechecks cannot be considered on academic grounds, as each script is marked independently by two Examiners and the confirmed result is then determined at an Examination Board meeting. The decision of that Board is final. Therefore, if you make a request for an administrative recheck, your script will not be re-examined or re-marked by the Examiners. A thorough administrative investigation will, however, be undertaken.

### How to submit an administrative recheck request

There is a fee payable for each recheck to cover the administrative cost of the process. This fee is currently £50 for each paper or section that you wish to have checked; for example, if you have taken four papers and you think the results for three of these papers may be incorrect, a fee of £150 is payable. This fee will be refunded in the highly unlikely event that an error is found.

To request an administrative recheck, please go to the International Programmes website and use the online payment service to make and pay for your recheck.

For further information, please go to:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams/admin\\_recheck](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/exams/admin_recheck)

### Further questions?

If, after reading this *handbook* and the Regulations, you have any queries in connection with your examinations, please contact the Student Assessment Office (see Contacts pages) who will be happy to help.

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# Requesting your study materials and maintaining your registration



## Changes to the continuing registration process

During 2011 we are changing the way in which the continuing registration process works and we are planning to offer online registration for the first time.

## How to request your study materials and maintain your registration

When you first registered as an International Programmes student we sent you a package of introductory study materials, including this *handbook*. In each subsequent year of your studies, normally in August/September, we will open the registration period and send you an alert by email to complete the continuing registration process online.

We will only open the continuing registration period once the examination results are available for your programme. This is so that we know which subjects each student will need to study in the following year and can make these available for selection during the online registration process.

## Advantages of online registration

Using the new online registration process you will be able to:

- select courses and request your study materials online
- pay online
- complete your registration in one process

- receive confirmation of your registration instantly
- save time by not having to wait for a paper form to be delivered through the post and processed, which should reduce the timeframe from completing your registration to receiving your materials.

If you are unable to complete the registration process online, we can send you a paper registration form and study materials questionnaire to complete and return on request. However, we would encourage you to complete the online process if possible, as this will be the quickest and most efficient way to register. If you do need to register using the paper process please contact the Registration and Learning Resources Office (see Contacts pages) before 1 September to request that the registration form and study materials questionnaire are sent to you.

It is very important that you register while the registration period is open. If you do not complete the registration process and pay your fee before the end of the registration period, you will be deemed to be 'inactive' and you will not be sent any new materials, or be permitted to enter for examinations. If you do not register in a particular year, your registration status will be updated to 'withdrawn' and you will not be able to access any International Programmes services.

Please make sure, when completing the online registration process that you

indicate all the courses that you intend to study, even if you are continuing to study the same courses as in the previous year. This is important as you will only be offered the opportunity to enter examinations for those courses that you have selected as part of the registration process. In addition, subject guides are often updated and there may be a new edition that we can send to you.

For new subjects, or where there has been a major revision to a subject guide, we aim to have the new guide available by **1 September** in the academic year leading up to the first examination. Any guides that are not ready when we send you your study materials will be listed as 'to follow' on your letter and will be sent to you as soon as they are ready.

## Delays in receiving your materials

Although a high percentage of study materials are despatched by courier, please always try to allow at least one month between completing your registration and contacting us to ask where your study materials are. This is to allow reasonable time for the processing of your fee and study course selections, the picking and packing of your consignment and finally the delivery of the consignment to you. It is also worth remembering that the processing time can be increased during very busy periods such as September and October so you may need to make an extra allowance for this.

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## Queries about your study materials

When you receive your study materials it is important to check the consignment note carefully. If you find that we have sent the wrong materials, or that any of the materials are missing, please contact the Registration and Learning Resources Office (see Contacts pages) as soon as possible and we will arrange for the correct materials to be sent to you.

### In brief:

- **We will send you an email alert when the online registration process for your programme opens.**
- **In order for you to receive your study materials, to access services from the International Programmes and to be eligible to enter for examinations, you must complete the registration process, including payment of fees, before the deadline.**
- **As part of the registration process you must indicate all the courses that you intend to study, even if you are continuing to study the same courses as in the previous year, as you will only be offered the opportunity to enter examinations for those courses that you have selected as part of the registration process.**
- **Please allow one month between completing the registration process and contacting us to ask where your study materials are.**
- **If you need to register using the paper-based process, please contact the Registration and Learning Resources team by 1 September to request the relevant registration forms.**

# Accreditation of prior learning

On some programmes you may be able to apply for 'accreditation of prior learning' if you have covered a similar syllabus in the same breadth and depth as part of a previous qualification. To be eligible to apply for accreditation of prior learning you must satisfy us that you have already passed examinations that equate in level, content and standard to the Foundation level courses that form part of your programme. If you are awarded an accreditation of prior learning you do not then have to take that particular Foundation level course as part of your programme.

**Not all programmes offer provision for accreditation of prior learning;** therefore you should check your Regulations to see if you can apply for accreditation of prior learning for the particular Foundation level courses of your programme. If your programme has provision for you to apply, you must make a formal application for accreditation of prior learning. Most students do this at the time they apply for the programme but, as a registered student, you may still apply provided you have **not** already made an examination entry for that particular course. If you fail an examination you may not, at a later stage, apply for accreditation of prior learning from that course.

**To apply for accreditation of prior learning you should send a letter of written application as soon as possible to the Admissions Office (see Contacts pages), but for undergraduate**

**programmes your application for accreditation must be received no later than:**

- **17 September**  
for applicants/students residing outside the European Union
- **17 October**  
for applicants/students residing within the European Union.

You should refer to your Regulations to find out if you are eligible to apply for accreditation of prior learning and for details of the particular courses for which accreditation of prior learning can be considered.

## In brief:

- **If you are awarded accreditation of prior learning you do not then have to take that particular course as part of your programme.**
- **You will need to satisfy certain criteria to be eligible to apply for accreditation of prior learning. These criteria are given in your Regulations.**
- **Not all programmes offer provision for accreditation of prior learning.**
- **You must make a formal application for all accreditation of prior learning.**
- **There are deadlines by which applications for accreditation of prior learning must be made.**

# Transfers



## Transfer from the Diploma in English

If you successfully complete the Diploma in English and wish to transfer to the BA English as an International Programmes student, you must complete and return the registration form which will be sent to you with the results of the Diploma examination. This form must be returned to the Student Assessment Office (see Contacts pages) to be received not later than **30 November** in the year in which you are awarded the Diploma.

If you wish to transfer to the **degree** before successfully completing the Diploma, and you satisfy the conditions given in the Regulations, then you must apply in writing to the Registration and Learning Resources Office (see Contacts pages). With your written application, you will need to submit appropriate documentary evidence of your qualifications in support of your request.

## Transferring to another International Programmes undergraduate programme

If you would like to transfer to another undergraduate programme offered through the International Programmes you should first check the relevant prospectus (available from the Information Centre (see Contacts pages) or our website at:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk)

to see if you satisfy the entrance requirements for the programme to which you would like to transfer. If you meet the necessary entrance requirements you can apply to transfer.

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Applications to transfer must be made in writing to the Registration and Learning Resources Office (see Contacts pages). When making an application you must give your full name, student number, correspondence address, the programme for which you are currently registered and the programme to which you wish to transfer.

Applications to transfer are considered on an individual basis. If your application is approved, in certain circumstances you may be awarded credit(s) on the new programme on the basis of your studies on the old programme. However, the award of credit(s) is also considered individually and remains at the discretion of the University.

If you make an application to transfer after you have made an examination entry on your current programme, your transfer application will not be considered until after the publication of the results of your examination.

If your transfer request is approved you will be required to pay any outstanding fees. On transfer to the new programme your registration will be valid for the remaining period of your current registration, unless you are transferring from a degree to a diploma, where the maximum period of registration is five years rather than eight years. If you do not complete your new programme within the time remaining in your current registration period, you may be able to apply to renew your registration for a further period. When considering whether to grant a renewal of your registration period the University will take into account the progress you have made in your studies during your

current period of registration. If a renewal is approved you will be required to pay an initial registration fee. If you do not have sufficient time remaining in your current period of registration to complete the programme to which you have transferred, you will be required to cancel your existing registration and apply to register afresh for the new programme. You must pay the initial registration fee for the new programme and you will be given a new period of registration.

### **Transferring to an International Programmes postgraduate programme**

If you would like to apply for a Masters degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate through the International Programmes, you will have to cancel your existing registration and submit a fresh application for registration for that degree, diploma or certificate.

### **Transferring to another United Kingdom university at undergraduate level**

#### **Applying to study at Goldsmiths or another College of the University of London**

How easily you can transfer to a College of the University of London depends on different factors (most importantly – the structure and content of what you have studied; how far you've got and how well you've done), and can never be guaranteed. If you are able to transfer to a College, it is likely that you will transfer into the second year.

If you have passed certain courses of the BA English you may apply to transfer to the corresponding full-time BA degree course for internal students at Goldsmiths. Entry is competitive, however, and each application will be considered on its merits.

If you are keen to transfer to Goldsmiths, we advise you to contact the Programme Director at Goldsmiths (see Contacts pages for details). She will be able to advise you on the likelihood of transfer and at what stage and under what conditions it is likely. If you want to find out about courses offered at other University of London Colleges, contact the Information Centre (see Contacts pages).

### Applying to other universities

You may wish to apply for entry to another university in the United Kingdom or elsewhere. You need to check with the universities concerned whether this is possible, as every university has its own conditions and procedures. We would advise you to start making enquiries at least a year before you wish to transfer. If you live overseas, the British Council is a good source of information about universities in the United Kingdom and how to apply to them, or you can contact

the Admissions Office at the university concerned. If you need confirmation of your results as part of the transfer process, please refer to Certificates, transcripts and the diploma supplement in the General section of this *handbook*.

### How to apply to universities in the United Kingdom

Applications to United Kingdom universities must be made via the Universities' and Colleges' Admissions Service (UCAS). The UCAS contact details are:

UCAS, Rosehill, New Barn Lane,  
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire  
GL52 3LZ. United Kingdom  
Email: [enq@ucas.ac.uk](mailto:enq@ucas.ac.uk)  
Website: [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

For consideration of a place from October in a particular year, the UCAS opening date for the receipt of applications is 1 September in the previous year and the deadline is 15 January of the year of study (i.e. for October 2012 start, applications open mid-September 2011 and the deadline for receipt of applications is 15 January 2012).

The British Council will have further information and application forms for UCAS.

### Hints for UCAS applications

1. If you are applying for second year entry, ensure that this is clearly indicated on the UCAS form.
2. Personal statements are a vital part of the UCAS application. Not all universities invite applicants for interviews, so this is your opportunity to express yourself. Read through the prospectus carefully and indicate how you satisfy the criteria/conditions that the University is looking for.
3. If you are studying with an institution, a senior academic should be responsible for writing your reference. The grades predicted for each subject should be clearly indicated on the UCAS form.

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# Notes

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# Introduction

This **General section** is intended to help guide your experience as an International Programmes student, providing useful information and advice that is common to all the courses offered by the University of London International Programmes.

For information that is specific to your programme of study, please refer to the **Programme section** of this *handbook*.

Studying as an International Programmes student, while offering enormous rewards, can be challenging. It is hoped that the information presented in this section will assist you during your studies, but if you require any additional information or support, please do not hesitate to contact a member of our staff. Full contact details are provided in the Programme section of this *handbook*. In addition, if you would like to see any further information included, please complete the Comment form at the end of this *handbook*.



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# Your Programme Specification and Regulations

All University of London International Programmes have individual Programme Specifications and Regulations. The Programme Specification and Regulations are combined in one document, and they are available on the following link:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/regs](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/regs)

They contain key information about your programme of study, such as:

- the structure and content of your programme
- the ways in which you can progress in your programme
- ways in which you can transfer to other programmes
- any prerequisites for courses and information on courses that cannot be taken together
- assessment Regulations
- syllabuses and course outlines and information on any courses that are being added or withdrawn from your programme
- marking information and classification guidelines.

Programmes are reviewed annually, and changes are sometimes made to keep them up to date. These changes are reflected in the Programme Specification and Regulations and it is important that you are familiar with these documents so that you are kept informed on any changes to your programme.

All students must comply with the Regulations for their respective programme, and also with the University of London regulations

[www.london.ac.uk/975.html?&no\\_cache=1&sword\\_list\[\]=Regulations](http://www.london.ac.uk/975.html?&no_cache=1&sword_list[]=Regulations)

If you have any questions about your Regulations, please contact the University. The University is not responsible for any consequences arising from students' failure to comply with the Regulations.

## In brief:

- **The Programme Specification and Regulations are reviewed annually, and any changes will be reflected in the Programme Specification and Regulations relevant for your programme.**
- **You should be familiar with the content of the Programme Specification and Regulations for your programme so that you are kept informed of any changes to your programme.**
- **If you have any questions about what is permitted in the Regulations, please contact the University.**

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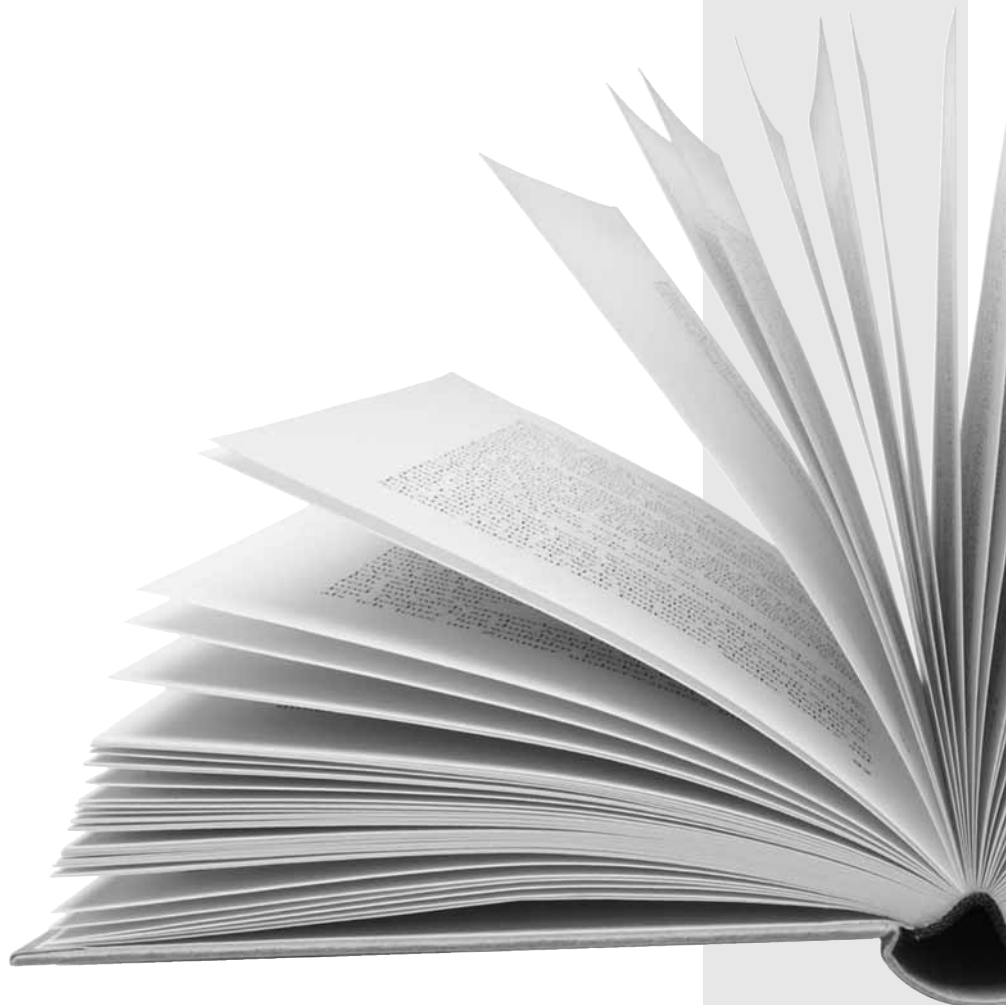
# Qualifications Framework

Each qualification or award granted by the University is located at a specific level. You can find the level of your qualification or award in your Programme Specification. The level of the qualification or award of all International Programmes follows the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA's) *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications* (FHEQ) which has operated in England, Wales and Northern Ireland since 2001. The purpose of the FHEQ is to describe the different 'levels'

and summarise the types of skills and competences a person who has attained a qualification is expected to demonstrate.

If you would like to read more about the FHEQ, please visit the QAA website at:

[www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/fheq/EWNI08/FHEQ08.pdf](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/fheq/EWNI08/FHEQ08.pdf)



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# Fees, refunds and financial assistance

## Fees

During your time as an International Programmes student you will be required to pay certain fees. A list of fees for your programme can be found on the International Programmes website and these fees have to be paid in full at the time that they fall due.

Each year all fees are reviewed and, in many cases, increased. In order to find out about the relevant fees for your programme, please go to the International Programmes website:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/fees](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/fees)

## How to pay

You can pay your fees to the University in one of the following ways:

- Online payments may be made at [www.londoninternational.ac.uk/onlinepayments](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/onlinepayments). (Please note that the online payment facility is password protected.)
- Sterling cheque made payable to the University of London. The cheque must be drawn on, and payable at, a United Kingdom-based bank branch.
- Any credit card recognised by Mastercard International Inc., the Visa Group or Maestro/Solo.
- Sterling banker's draft made payable to the University of London and crossed 'A/c payee'. The draft must state the paying bank's name and branch location, which must be in the United Kingdom.
- In cash, in person at Stewart House (please see Contacts pages). **Please do not send cash through the post.**

- Students may also use the online payment facility to view their own Student Statement. It will be possible to see when new fees are due and the status of any payments made.

## Refunds

As a general rule, fees paid to the University are not refundable, but please refer to the Regulations for your programme for full details.

## Financial assistance

Financial assistance is not available from the University. However, some employers in both the public and private sectors may be willing to consider offering financial assistance to their employees. Therefore, if you are employed, it may be worth discussing this with your employer.

**Students who are resident in the United Kingdom** may be able to apply for a part-time student grant (for undergraduate programmes only) or a Career Development Loan. Information can be obtained as follows:

### Part-time student grant:

Information Line – 0845 300 5090  
[www.direct.gov.uk/en/educationandlearning](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/educationandlearning)

### Career Development Loan:

Information Line – 0800 100 900  
[www.direct.gov.uk/pcdl](http://www.direct.gov.uk/pcdl)

**Students with a disability/special needs who are resident in the United Kingdom** may also be able to apply for a **Disabled Student Allowance (DSA)**. For a copy of the information leaflet (which answers most of the questions commonly asked about DSAs), please contact:

**Disabled Student Allowance**

Information Line – 0845 300 5090

Textphone – 0800 210 280

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/EducationandTraining](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/EducationandTraining)

The information leaflet is also available on audio tape or in Braille.

**Students who are members of the United Kingdom Armed Forces** should note that the University of London has been approved by the Ministry of Defence in support of the Enhanced Learning Credits (ELC) Scheme (ELC Provider Reference Number 1284). The Scheme provides financial support to eligible Service personnel who wish to enhance their educational or vocational achievements. The ELC Administration Service website can be found at:

[www.enhancedlearningcredits.co.uk](http://www.enhancedlearningcredits.co.uk)

**Students who are in prison** in the United Kingdom may be able to get help with the cost of their studies from the Prisoners' Education Trust. For further information contact:

**Prisoners' Education Trust**

Wardle House

Riverside Drive

Mitcham

Surrey CR4 4BU

Tel: 020 8648 7760

Fax: 020 8648 7762

[www.prisonerseducation.org.uk](http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk)

**Students who study overseas** are advised to check on the availability of loan and financial assistance schemes in the country in which you are studying.

**In brief:**

- **A list of fees for your programme can be found on the International Programmes website.**
- **As a general rule, fees paid to the University are not refundable.**
- **Financial assistance is not available from the University but often employers will provide assistance.**
- **Certain students in the United Kingdom can apply to a range of loans and financial assistance schemes.**
- **If you study overseas you are advised to check the availability of such loan schemes in the country in which you are studying.**

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# Studying at an institution

All our programmes are designed to be completed anywhere in the world by independent study (with the exception of the five undergraduate Diplomas and one Access programme listed below). However, on many of our undergraduate courses – and some postgraduate courses – students often choose to attend classes at a local institution and can benefit from the support these organisations can offer.

The type of support provided varies between institutions. Most teaching institutions provide regular full-time and part-time classes or occasional revision sessions. Others may provide online or correspondence support. Institutions may also provide social and recreational facilities, libraries and other services that could benefit you during your time as an International Programmes student.

As mentioned above, attending an institution is not compulsory for most International Programmes; however, if you wish to register on any of the Diploma courses or the Access programme listed below, you must attend a recognised institution that has been listed as offering the programme on the International Programmes directory of institutions:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/onlinerearch/institutions/index.jsp](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/onlinerearch/institutions/index.jsp)

If you register for any of the following programmes, you must attend an institution that has been given formal permission to provide teaching support for that programme:

- Diploma in Computing and Information Systems
- Diploma in Creative Computing

- Diploma in Economics
- Diploma in Law
- Diploma in Social Sciences
- Access programme for BSc in Business Administration.

If you are not on one of the above programmes but are seeking additional support we advise that you wait for confirmation from the University of London that you are eligible for the programme of your choice before enrolling at an institution and paying tuition fees.

Please note, enrolment at a local institution is not the same as registering as an International Programmes student with the University of London.

## Choosing an institution

Most students on International Programmes attend institutions for additional support in their learning, and are happy with the assistance they receive. If you decide to assist your studies by attending an institution we suggest you first check the International Programmes' online directory of institutions.

The directory of institutions is provided to guide University of London International Programmes students who wish to study with an institution. **The directory does not list all institutions offering support for International Programmes, but only those which have proved to the University of London that they meet a set of specific criteria on teaching, student support and facilities.** These institutions are called recognised centres.

Recognised centres are split into two categories: **Affiliate Centres** and

**Registered Centres.** Affiliate Centres have proved to the University that they are able to offer a long-term commitment to developing high standards in respect of teaching, support and administration. Affiliate Centre status is the highest level of recognition the University can give an institution.

Registered centres also meet specific quality criteria and demonstrate standards for their teaching, support and administration that are acceptable to the University of London for supporting International Programmes students to prepare for their examinations.

We aim to ensure that all International Programmes students who study at a recognised centre will encounter good standards of teaching, support and administration. In order to assure students of these standards, International Programmes staff undertake regular exercises to monitor these institutions, which include site visits by University of London academics.

## Checklist to use when choosing an institution

The University of London International Programmes has a long track record of working with independent teaching institutions across the world. We officially recognise some institutions (Affiliate or Registered Centres) that offer study support to International Programmes students, as a guide to the standards of the teaching, support and administration that you will receive.

The Affiliate or Registered designations apply to specific programmes on named

campuses. Although these designations should guide you in deciding which institution to attend, it is important that you check carefully that the institution suits your particular needs.

The following checklist will help you in deciding on the institution that is right for you.

### The teaching institution's recognition status from the University of London

- Is the institution a recognised centre of the University of London International Programmes? Does it have Affiliate or Registered Centre status? See the directory of institutions to find those institutions which are recognised.

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/onlineSearch/institutions/index.jsp](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/onlineSearch/institutions/index.jsp)

- If the institution is not listed, it is possible that they are in discussions with the University of London International Programmes with a view to commencing our recognition process. However, we are not able to comment on such institutions. As such, we advise you to undertake your own research on them. The checklist on our website provides guidance on some of the issues you should consider.

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/study\\_ep/local\\_support/check\\_list.shtml](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/study_ep/local_support/check_list.shtml)

### The institution's local accreditation/ recognition

- Is this college or institute registered with the relevant authorities, such as the ministry of education in your country?

### **The institution's history**

- How long has it been established? Be careful about institutions with little experience of teaching at undergraduate or postgraduate level.
- How long has it been teaching International Programmes students? Has it got a 'track record' of successful results in University of London examinations or examinations at a similar level of university study?

### **The institution's fees, facilities and services**

- Does its prospectus/website give details of the specific services and facilities it can offer you?
- How do its services and fees compare with other institutions in your area?
- Does the timing and frequency of classes suit you? Are there tutorials as well as lectures and what size are the tutorial groups?
- Does the institution offer teaching and learning support for all levels of the degree? Is this support limited to a range of courses?
- Ask to see the facilities, especially the library. Can you borrow books from the library or is it for reference only? If you already have your subject guides, check that there are copies of the essential and recommended texts. Is there room to study in the library and is it quiet?

### **Registration and enrolment**

- Will there be a written contract between you and the institution when you enrol? If not, make sure you

understand the terms and conditions that apply and your liability. Check how you pay fees – in one payment or in instalments? What is the refund policy if you cease studying for any reason?

- Talk to students who are already enrolled and get their opinions.

We advise you not to enrol at an institution until you have an offer of registration from the University of London International Programmes. If you are eager to start your studies ask if the institution is able to charge you only for the tuition you have actually received if you are not successful in your application to study with the University.

### **Additional checks for online or correspondence institutions:**

- If based in the United Kingdom, is the institution accredited by the Open and Distance Learning Quality Council or is it a member of the Association of British Correspondence Colleges?
- If the institution offers study materials as part of its tuition, do they go beyond the International Programmes subject guides in their content and coverage?
- If a tutor service is offered, what response time does the institution guarantee?
- Can you send in your assignments by fax or email and can you ask to receive feedback the same way?

If you have further questions please check our FAQs in the first instance to see if the answers are there.

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/study\\_ep/faqs/institutions](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/study_ep/faqs/institutions)

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## List of institutions formally recognised by the University of London

Please visit our directory of institutions to find an institution near you offering support for your programme.

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/online-search/institutions/index.jsp](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/online-search/institutions/index.jsp)

Remember, you are not required to attend a teaching institution unless you are registered for one of the following programmes:

- Diploma in Computing and Information Systems
- Diploma in Creative Computing
- Diploma in Economics
- Diploma in Law
- Diploma in Social Sciences
- Access programme for BSc in Business Administration.

Details on the specific requirements of your programme can be found in the Programme section of your *handbook*.

## Complaints

If you have concerns or complaints about an institution you are attending, then as a first stage, you should discuss these with the staff at your institution. In many situations you will be able to resolve your problems quickly and easily.

If you still feel, however, that your problem has not been sorted out, then you should follow the further stages in our Complaints Procedure. Additional information can be found later in the General section of this *handbook* and the full procedure can be found on our website at:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current-students/general-resources/complaints.shtml](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current-students/general-resources/complaints.shtml)



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## Libraries

During your studies you will need access to a range of textbooks and periodicals that are not always available to buy, so it is strongly advised that you join, or have access to, a good library. We provide details of libraries that offer their facilities to International Programmes students on our website at:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current\\_students/general\\_resources/](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current_students/general_resources/)

This information is updated annually.

For information on opening hours, subject areas offered and any fees that may be payable, you should contact the library concerned directly. Their websites may also provide this type of information.

Many libraries will ask you to provide proof of your registration with the University of London. For details on how to obtain this proof, please see the 'Confirmation of registration' section of this *handbook*.

If you cannot find a library in your country or region, it is best to contact your British Council to see if it has a library or can recommend any alternatives. It is also worth contacting your local university or college to see if they will allow you to use their library facilities. Some universities or colleges may not, however, be able to offer this service.

If you find a library that is not included on our list, we would be grateful if you would let us know (see address on our Comment form). We can then contact the library to ask if we can include them on our list next year.

## Bookshops

The Programme section of this *handbook* will tell you if you need to buy textbooks to supplement the study materials we send you. This is often, but not always, the case.

If you need to buy textbooks, a list of bookshops that International Programmes students have found useful can be found on our website at:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current\\_students/general\\_resources/](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current_students/general_resources/)

You should contact the bookshop directly in order to check whether they stock the particular book you require.

If you find a bookshop that is not included on our list, but has provided you with good service, we would be grateful if you could let us know (see address on our Comment form). We can then contact the bookshop to ask if we can include them on our list next year.

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## Change of details

If any of your personal details change (for example, if you are moving home or you change your name or your email address) please tell us as far in advance as possible so that we can ensure that your student record is correct. You can let us know by updating your records online, or by contacting us by email or post. For ease, we have included two copies of a Change of details form at the end of this *handbook* that can be completed and returned to us rather than having to use the online process. Alternatively, you can write a letter or send an email. Please send any notification of a change to your details to the Registration and Learning Resources Office (see Contacts pages).

## Confirmation of registration

If you complete the online registration process you will receive an instant confirmation of registration message, which you can print off for your records and use to provide proof of your registration with the University of London. If you complete registration via the paper-based process and you require a Certificate of Registration, please contact the Registration and Learning Resources Office (see Contacts pages) who will be happy to send you one.



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# Information for students with specific access requirements

The University has an Inclusive Practice policy for International Programmes students with specific access requirements. This includes students with a disability or learning difficulty, students who are currently in prison and students who have legally imposed travel restrictions. A statement explaining this policy is given on the International Programmes website at:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/contact\\_us/sen.shtml](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/contact_us/sen.shtml)

As part of its policy, the University will make every reasonable effort to accommodate you if you have specific access requirements by:

1. making special examination arrangements
- and/or
2. wherever possible, and where required as a result of a disability and/or specific accessibility issue, providing our study materials in an alternative format (e.g. large print) or another medium.

**Please note** that, although the University will make every effort to provide your materials in the format you have requested, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. We may need to suggest an alternative format to that which you request.

## Special examination arrangements

If you are disabled and/or you have specific access requirements and you think you need special examination arrangements (such as particular aids or rest breaks), you should let us know as early as possible.

We strongly advise applicants with disabilities and/or specific access requirements to complete the relevant sections in their application form. If you haven't disclosed such information in your application form and you wish to request **special examination arrangements** or **materials in alternative formats**, you will be able to request this when you complete any online enrolment process. As part of this process, you will have the opportunity to explain your condition/circumstances. Medical or other evidence in support of your request will be required.

You are advised to contact the Special Needs Coordinator (see Contacts pages) to discuss your needs as early as possible (even before you register), as it may take additional time to agree examination arrangements and/ or to prepare materials in alternative formats.

The University has a panel that considers applications from students for special examination arrangements. The aim of the panel is to ensure that a student with a disability and/or specific access requirement is not disadvantaged (or advantaged) when compared with other students.

Any information you provide about your disability and/or specific access requirements will be treated as confidential; it will be made available only to staff working to support your needs.

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# University of London Union

The University of London Union (ULU) is the students' union for more than 120,000 students at the 19 colleges and three research institutes of the University of London.

[www.ulucol.ac.uk](http://www.ulucol.ac.uk)

As a student of the International Programmes, you can join ULU as an associate member at a cost of £20.00.

ULU runs over 40 student-led sports clubs and societies and an extensive intercollegiate league and cup programme in which 4,000 students compete each week. ULU also campaigns on behalf of students and offers a broad range of services and facilities including a live

music venue, bars and cafés. To find out more about what ULU has to offer, take a look at the ULU Guide online at:

[www.ulucol.ac.uk/content/index.php?page=67205](http://www.ulucol.ac.uk/content/index.php?page=67205)

If you would like to join, you can obtain a membership card from the main ULU building in Malet Street (see Contacts pages), very close to the International Programmes main administrative offices at Stewart House. Alternatively, you can join by post. For further information about how to join, visit the associate membership page of the website at:

[www.ulucol.ac.uk/content/index.php?page=86375](http://www.ulucol.ac.uk/content/index.php?page=86375)



# The Careers Group, University of London

We are the largest higher education careers service in the country. We provide recruitment services to students and graduates from UCL, King's College, Queen Mary, St. Mary's University College, Goldsmiths, SOAS, Royal Holloway and specialist Colleges, as well as many other institutions in London and across the United Kingdom.

We organise a number of national recruitment exhibitions throughout the year, providing students and graduates with opportunities to meet and network with top recruiters and institutions. They can also get CV advice and information from our expert careers advisers and attend useful presentations and workshops.

Our comprehensive website provides access to a wide range of online careers resources. This includes a new, virtual careers information resource, vacancy and job opportunity listings and JobAlert – a free service that delivers job notifications to you based on your preferences.

Wherever you're headed, we can support your career development needs.

Find out more at:

[www.careers.lon.ac.uk](http://www.careers.lon.ac.uk)

Find us on Facebook at:

[www.careers.lon.ac.uk/facebook](http://www.careers.lon.ac.uk/facebook)

# C2, a service from the Careers Group

C2 is a not-for-profit careers advice service for graduates and professionals at any stage of their career. C2 can inspire you not only to make a career change, it can also ensure that you make the right one – be it within the same sector, the same area of expertise or something completely different. This might involve some time with a consultant, attending a couple of workshops, or we might just recommend a helpful book to start you off.

We are part of The Careers Group, University of London and also run courses, seminars and recruitment and information fairs. As an International Programmes student you may be especially interested in C2's online CV advice service which allows users anywhere in the world to gain valuable advice on their CV. C2 also offers advice on issues to do with occupations and careers, the United Kingdom graduate labour market and further study and training.

Find out more at:

[www.c2careers.com](http://www.c2careers.com)

the  
**CareersGroup**  
University of London



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# Complaints procedure

The University of London International Programmes aims to provide the highest quality service to students at all times. Sometimes, however, we do know that things can go wrong and you may feel you need to raise an issue with us. If possible, we would always prefer to resolve any concerns you have with us, with a minimum of formality.

Therefore, the first stage of our procedure, is to always advise you to contact International Programmes staff/ departments directly involved, as in many cases it may be possible for issues to be resolved quickly and easily.

If you still feel, however, that your problem has not been sorted out, then you should follow the further stages in our Complaints Procedure. This will ensure that your complaint will be directed to our Director of Corporate Performance and Quality who, acting on behalf of the Dean of the University of London International Programmes, will investigate the matter further.

The full procedure can be found on our website at:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current\\_students/general\\_resources/complaints.shtml](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/current_students/general_resources/complaints.shtml)

**Director of Corporate Performance and Quality**

University of London International Programmes  
Stewart House  
32 Russell Square  
London WC1B 5DN  
United Kingdom

## Advice on how to proceed

If problems do arise, you may want to speak to someone initially to clarify the procedure before submitting a formal complaint. The University of London's Information Centre can explain, confidentially, the Complaints Procedure to you and make sure you are familiar with, and are following the different stages of, the procedure (see Contacts pages). We would advise all students to contact them before submitting a formal complaint.

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# Certificates, transcripts and Diploma supplements

Successful completion of your studies represents a tremendous personal achievement that will have required hard work, commitment and dedication. When you graduate we will send you a certificate confirming the successful completion of your programme of study. You will also be invited to attend our graduation ceremony (see opposite).

We will also automatically send you a Diploma supplement, which will include a transcript of your academic guidance record. You will find your Diploma supplement particularly useful to show to future employers and/or educational establishments. They describe the nature, level, content and status of the programme you have studied and successfully completed.

Please note that due to the high volumes of awards and transcripts we process each year, students normally receive their Diploma supplements and transcripts **3–6 months** after the final Exam Board for their programme has met.

## Transcripts

The Transcripts Office is also able to provide former students with additional copies of transcripts, as well as supply current students with transcripts detailing their studies to date. A fee is involved for this service. In order to request a transcript you will need to fill out an application form from the website:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/transcripts](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/transcripts)

Please note that your transcripts will show all attempts at examinations whether passed, failed or referred.

## Official letters confirming your award

The Transcripts Office can also provide official letters for a fee, which will confirm an award. In our experience, these are generally acceptable as proof of your degree for employment and visa purposes. For more information go to:

[www.international.ac.uk/transcripts](http://www.international.ac.uk/transcripts)

## Replacement certificates

If you require a replacement certificate of your University of London degree, please send an email to [diploma.enquiries@lon.ac.uk](mailto:diploma.enquiries@lon.ac.uk) and state your name, qualification and year of graduation. A fee is involved for this service.

You should note that at certain times of year, this office gets extremely busy and processing may take **many weeks**. You should therefore submit your application as early as possible.

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# The graduation ceremony

Each year, usually in March, a ceremony is held in London at which graduates from degree and postgraduate programmes are presented to the Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor of the University of London or the Dean of the International Programmes. Many graduates of the International Programmes from all over the world attend this formal ceremony, together with family or friends. The ceremony ends with a reception for graduates and their guests. This is an opportunity for them to meet staff of the International Programmes and the Lead Colleges in a more informal atmosphere.

Information about the graduation ceremony is sent to you with the notification of your results after successful completion of your degree or postgraduate programme. We recommend that you apply as early as possible to attend. Although spaces for graduates are unlimited, tickets for guests are allocated on a first come, first served basis, and there is always a high demand. If you are unable to attend the ceremony in the year following successful completion of your award, you would be most welcome, provided space is available, to attend in another year. For further information, please contact the Corporate Affairs Office (see Contacts pages).



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# University of London International Programmes Alumni Association

Once you have graduated you will have the opportunity to join the University of London International Programmes Alumni Association. Being a member of this Association will not only enable you to contribute to the University of London community but will also allow you to have contact with other graduates across the world. Through the alumni events programme you will be given the opportunity to meet with University of London graduates who share professional and academic interests.

For more information on how the Alumni Association can assist you as a graduate, please contact the Alumni Office (see Contacts pages) or visit our website at:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/alumni)

## How our alumni can help you as a student

The Alumni Association has a number of Student Ambassadors who can help you while you are studying with the International Programmes. They can offer you advice on how to cope with your studies, based on their own experience.

There are a number of Student Ambassadors from a variety of courses all over the world – you are free to contact any of them. For their details please visit:

[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/alumni/ambassadors/index.shtml](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/alumni/ambassadors/index.shtml)

You can also hear first-hand from alumni and academics on our YouTube channel at:

[www.youtube.com/unioflondon](http://www.youtube.com/unioflondon)

# Change of details form

If you have moved or are planning to move, or have new contact details, you can now update your details online via the International Programmes website. Alternatively, one copy of this form should be completed as applicable and returned to the Registration and Learning Resources Office (Ground Floor), Stewart House, 32 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DN.

Please print clearly in BLOCK CAPITALS

Full name: .....

New name (if applicable): .....

Student number:.....

Programme of study:.....

Current address: .....

.....

.....

New address (if applicable):.....

.....

Email:.....

New email (if applicable):.....

Phone/fax:.....

New phone/fax (if applicable):.....

Date from which this new contact should be used:.....

Signature: .....

Date sent to International Programmes: .....



# Change of details form

If you have moved or are planning to move, or have new contact details, you can now update your details online via the International Programmes website. Alternatively, one copy of this form should be completed as applicable and returned to the Registration and Learning Resources Office (Ground Floor), Stewart House, 32 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DN.

Please print clearly in BLOCK CAPITALS

Full name: .....

New name (if applicable): .....

Student number:.....

Programme of study:.....

Current address: .....

.....

.....

New address (if applicable):.....

.....

Email:.....

New email (if applicable):.....

Phone/fax:.....

New phone/fax (if applicable):.....

Date from which this new contact should be used:.....

Signature: .....

Date sent to International Programmes: .....

**All programmes offered through the University of London International Programmes are developed by academics at the University of London's constituent Colleges. Assessment is the responsibility of academics at these Colleges. Currently these include:** Birkbeck, Goldsmiths, Heythrop College, Institute of Education, King's College London, The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Queen Mary, Royal Holloway, Royal Veterinary College, School of Oriental and African Studies, and UCL (University College London).

For further information on the range of programmes we offer, please visit our website or contact us at:

The Information Centre, University of London, Stewart House,  
32 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DN United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)20 7862 8360/1/2

Fax: +44 (0)20 7862 8358

Email: [enquiries@london.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@london.ac.uk)

**[www.londoninternational.ac.uk](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk)**

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(Student blog)

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