



BIRMINGHAM CITY  
School of English

# ENGLISH UNDERGRADUATE GUIDE

#IAMBCU

Birmingham City University

# WHY STUDY A CREATIVE DEGREE IN BIRMINGHAM?

Based in the centre of England and bursting with ambition, energy and enthusiasm, Birmingham is a fantastic place to live, study and work. With world-class art, drama, music, dance and performing arts, it has one of the greatest reputations in the UK for entertainment. Birmingham is also home to the world-famous Jewellery Quarter which produces 40% of all the jewellery made in the UK.

Described as the youngest city in Europe, Birmingham has excellent transport links, amazing concert and sporting venues and beautiful historical buildings, including the iconic Library of Birmingham. It also has some of the finest theatres, museums and galleries in the country, such as the Hippodrome, the Birmingham Repertory Theatre and the internationally acclaimed Ikon Gallery.

Birmingham is a champion of innovation and progression. Multiple locations around the city are receiving dynamic regeneration schemes to match the most impressive international cities. The extensive canal system, which is already larger than Venice, is set to undergo a complete transformation and a Games village is being built in Perry Barr for the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

With over 571 parks, Birmingham has more green spaces than any other European city. It's also home to the largest jazz festival in the UK and many other music, literature and food events. Film fans can head to Birmingham's former industrial heartland, Digbeth, where hit TV show Peaky Blinders was filmed and tanneries and blacksmiths have given way to film production, gaming and creative agencies. Birmingham really is the perfect city for creative people to discover their full potential.

## ABOUT THE SCHOOL

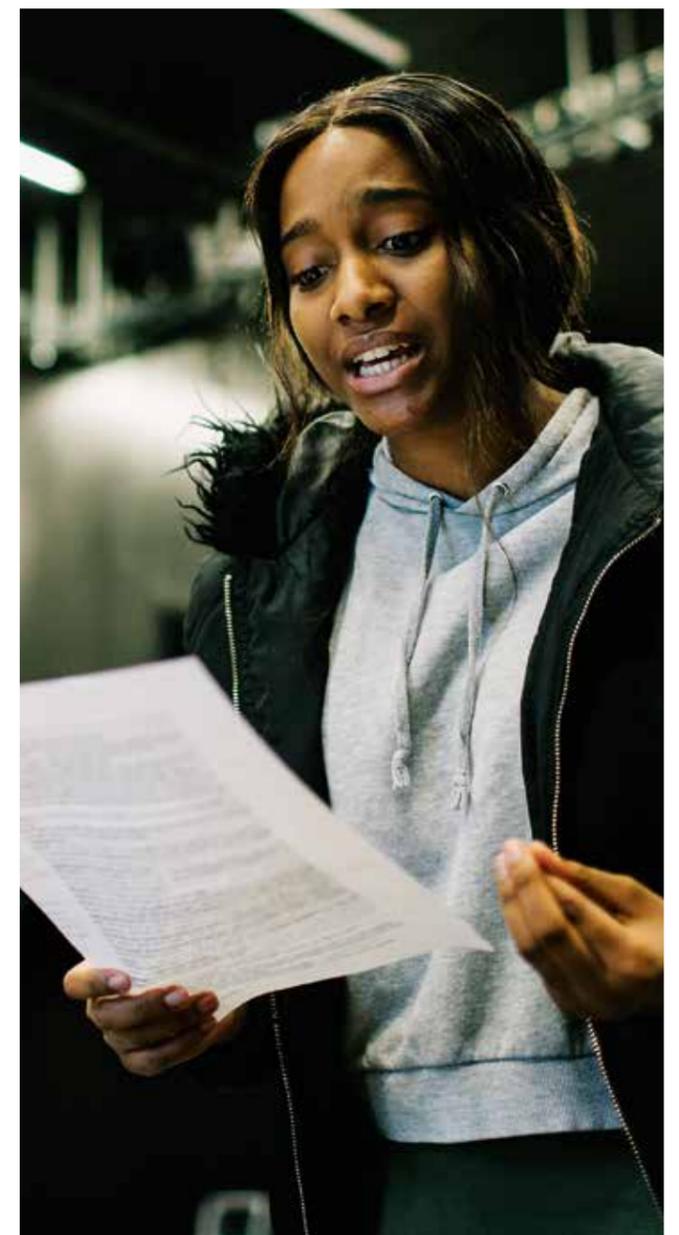
The School of English takes full advantage of its location in Birmingham. We are committed to developing strong links with employers in Birmingham and the West Midlands. Several language and creative writing modules have explicit employer and industry engagement, where you'll work in collaboration with employers and partners over the course of a semester and be encouraged to adopt industry-standard practices to facilitate connections and links independently with external organisations.



Our research underpins all of our course design. The School has made a strong return to every Research Assessment Exercise (RAE and REF) since 1996 and currently boasts award-winning scholars and writers of international renown in all its constituent fields, whether literature, linguistics, drama or creative writing.

In 2012 we launched our Institute of Creative and Critical Writing. The Institute brings together writers, academics, students, literary agents and publishers to share ideas and experiences in a rich programme of masterclasses and events which are hosted throughout the academic year. The Institute also publishes an annual collection of original creative writing by students and staff in the School of English.

English at Birmingham City University is a subject that encompasses the study of literature, language, drama and creative writing. Ours is a community where each individual is empowered to shape their learning, research and practice in creative, innovative and thought-provoking ways. We are ambitious in our creative and critical practice, in challenging convention and in developing an inclusive curriculum that reflects the distinctiveness of each and every student. We are an outstanding School, whose community of learners, teachers and researchers is built on respect, diversity, friendship and a shared passion for our subject. We are a welcoming environment but one which demands academic rigour and commitment to consistently high standards. As such, our teaching and research is world-class and aims to have maximum impact on society. We believe that studying English opens up possibilities. Its study enables you to realise your potential; to become creative, analytical, organised and articulate graduates. This is why we work collaboratively with Schools across the University and with communities and professionals in our home city and beyond. We are English without borders, trading in endless possibilities of talent and creativity.



# WHY

# CHOOSE US?

The School's commitment to research-informed teaching and collaborative learning means that you'll have the opportunity to critically reflect on the place of English in the wider world. Employability is embedded across our programmes and our graduates are characterised by their extensive knowledge, critical thinking and intellectual curiosity, reflected in the skills and abilities that will enable them to adapt to a wide range of career paths, employment opportunities, or further study at Master's or PhD level.

Graduates have gone on to careers such as teaching, librarianship, marketing, journalism and public relations. You will become independent researchers, critical thinkers and creative practitioners, able to apply your knowledge, synthesise ideas and communicate these effectively in a wide variety of forms.

## INDUSTRY LINKS AND PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

You will have the option to complete a work placement as part of your undergraduate studies. Here you will develop skills and abilities in a sector-specific context, while ensuring that your academic aims and objectives are met as part of your wider learning journey.



## FACILITIES

You will study at both the home of the School of English in Millennium Point, and at our £63 million development the Curzon Building, located on our City Centre Campus in the vibrant second city that is Birmingham. Discover your bright and open learning spaces, your 24-hour library (during term-time), drama, media and radio studios, along with state-of-the-art lecture theatres, and a variety of sociable break-out areas, all adding to your unique learning experience.



## BA (HONS) ENGLISH

Course code: Q301  
 Location: City Centre  
 Duration: 3 years full-time  
[www.bcu.ac.uk/english-ba](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/english-ba)  
[www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog)  
 Twitter: @bcuenglish

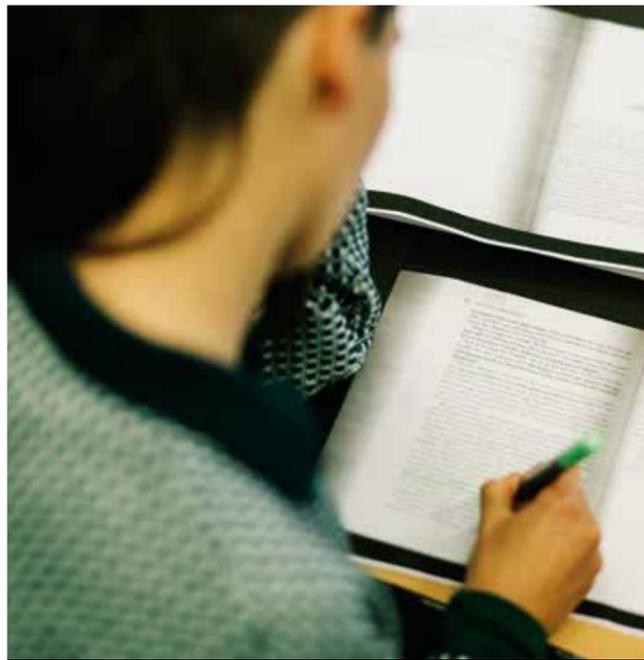
This course is our most flexible degree and allows you to shape the direction of your study. You can combine the study of literature, language, drama and creative writing, or choose to focus on one or two of these areas. This means there is greater scope for you to follow your own interests in English or, alternatively, to develop specialist knowledge and skills in one or more fields. You'll also have the opportunity to work with others on collaborative projects, take a work placement, study abroad, and, in your final year, develop a major project in an area of your interest.

English at BCU allows you to analyse the development of English literature from the Early Modern period to the contemporary; think about the influence and impact of English as a global language; develop your creative writing skills and practice; and evaluate plays so that you can understand the dynamics of performance. You'll consider how these various aspects of English reflect and respond to society and help shape the direction of different cultures.

Over the course of your studies you'll gain skills in critical analysis, organisation and time management, independent working, research, evaluation and communication. You'll have the opportunity to be both creative and critical; to follow your interests and shape the direction of your degree.

***"My lecturers – experts in their field, and heavily involved in world-leading research – nurtured my interest in English by offering challenging content, and giving me the platform to develop my own ideas. My course surrounded me with like-minded students who I could share my love of all things linguistics with. These factors combined provided me with the supportive network I needed to excel in my studies."***

**Chloe Derry, BA (Hons) English graduate**  
 Content Officer in higher education



## BA (HONS) ENGLISH AND CREATIVE WRITING

Course code: QW38  
Location: City centre  
Duration: 3 years full-time  
[www.bcu.ac.uk/english-cw](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/english-cw)  
Twitter: @bcuenglish  
Blog: [www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog)

The focus of the BA (Hons) English and Creative Writing is on the development of your writing skills and practice. You'll have the opportunity to experiment with different forms, such as prose, screenwriting, creative non-fiction, and poetry and develop an understanding of their different structures and techniques. You'll produce portfolios of original work and, building upon your experience of writing across different genres, you will finish your study with the production of a piece of major independent work.

We believe that good writers are good readers, so your study of creative writing will encompass the analysis of literature from a writer's perspective. This will be complemented by option modules, which allow you to study aspects of literature, language or drama alongside your core creative writing components. You'll also have the opportunity to take a work placement module, to study abroad and to work collaboratively with students from across our Faculty.

Each year, the School produces an anthology of original creative writing to which English and Creative Writing students are encouraged to submit. This is an opportunity to have your work published and to work with an editorial team. We also host regular workshops and seminars which give you access to guest authors, poets, publishers and literary agents, as part of our Institute of Creative and Critical Writing's annual programme of events.



***"The opportunities have been amazing. I have produced a small film, had a few publications, and I contributed to university open days, mentoring and the school newspaper. I got involved in most projects the School of English had to offer."***

**Holly Psaliou, BA (Hons) English and Creative Writing and MA Creative Writing graduate**  
Short film producer and writer



## BA (HONS) ENGLISH AND DRAMA

Course code: QW34  
Location: City Centre  
Duration: 3 years full-time  
[www.bcu.ac.uk/english-drama](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/english-drama)  
Twitter: @bcuenglish  
Blog: [www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog)

As a BA (Hons) English and Drama student you will learn about the historical development of drama; you'll understand its place within the canon of literature and you'll consider how performers and practitioners make decisions about staging plays. You'll think about plays in their historical and social context and apply theoretical approaches to deepen your analytical and critical understanding of these texts. You'll work collaboratively with other students on presentations and performances and, in your final year, have the opportunity to select, rehearse and perform a play with your peers.

Alongside your core drama modules, you'll be able to select modules from a range of options in language, literature, drama and creative writing. You'll also get the chance to take a work placement, study abroad, and work collaboratively with other students from across our Faculty.

Over the course of your degree you'll develop skills in research, analysis and evaluation, presentation, performance and writing which will enable you to become confident, articulate and engaged graduates.

***"Being able to competently express my thoughts and streams of analysis on the page has allowed me to articulate myself on the stage, screen or recording studio in a different type of way. The course has carved out new ways of thinking about character development or story structure that I would not have realised if I didn't study English and Drama at BCU."***

**Esmonde Cole, BA (Hons) English and Drama graduate**  
Actor and Freelance Voice-Over Artist



## BA (HONS) ENGLISH AND JOURNALISM

**Course code:** Q30J  
**Location:** City Centre  
**Duration:** 3 years full-time  
[www.bcu.ac.uk/english-journ](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/english-journ)  
**Twitter:** @bcuenglish and @BCUJournalism  
**Blog:** [www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog)

The BA (Hons) English and Journalism course is ideal for anyone wishing to follow a career in the dynamic and competitive world of journalism.

This course is built around developing your practical knowledge and experience of journalism. You'll learn about how to be an ethical journalist, how the industry is changing, and how it operates from both a local and global perspective. In each year of your study you will take a Live Newsroom module, which will give you 'hands-on' experience of working as a journalist, sourcing, writing and potentially publishing your stories.

This part of your course is complemented by your study of English. Here you'll develop your understanding of English language – how it works and how you can use it – alongside the opportunity to develop your own interests in English. You can select modules from a range of options in literature, language, or creative writing. This means that you'll develop advanced skills in research, writing and communication both within an industry-context and beyond.

English and Journalism students will also have the opportunity to have their work published on our Birmingham Eastside platform and work with the HuffPost Centre for Journalism. Our unique partnership with HuffPost UK means English and Journalism students are set real-world challenges in modules, receive tutorials focused on news, lifestyle, politics and entertainment, and benefit from guest talks.



## BA (HONS) ENGLISH LITERATURE

**Course code:** Q320  
**Location:** City Centre  
**Duration:** 3 years full-time  
[www.bcu.ac.uk/english-lit](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/english-lit)  
**Twitter:** @bcuenglish  
**Blog:** [www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog)

Looking for a highly-prized English Literature degree course that you can tailor to your individual interests and career aspirations?

Learn from respected academics and expert practitioners on a course that has recently achieved an excellent satisfaction score in the National Student Survey (NSS 2021).

You will study literature from all of the major periods, movements and genres, deepening your understanding of English literature over time and across different forms. You'll also have the option to take modules in philosophy, creative writing, and language.

**100%**  
overall  
satisfaction  
in the  
National  
Student  
Survey  
2021



## BA (HONS) ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

**Course code:** Q300  
**Location:** City Centre  
**Duration:** 3 years full-time  
[www.bcu.ac.uk/english-lang-lit](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/english-lang-lit)  
**Twitter:** @bcuenglish  
**Blog:** [www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog)

English Language and Literature degrees instil graduates with a range of skills which are highly sought after by employers.

The BA (Hons) English Language and Literature course will support you in developing interdisciplinary skills in both areas, as well as the wider field of humanities.

You will have a unique opportunity to strengthen your critical skills in informed reading and analysis, whilst deepening your appreciation for language and literature. You will develop your writing, close-reading and research skills, and learn to express your arguments coherently and persuasively.

Your language studies will be applied to everyday and professional settings, allowing you to strengthen your understanding of communicative processes; your literature studies will provide an opportunity to examine literature from all of the major periods, movements and genres. Your degree will allow you to tailor your studies to your individual interests.

*"I never thought that working for the police would be possible with my degree, however the skills and interests I gained during my three years at Birmingham City University really helped with the subsequent recruitment process. Effective communication skills and research capabilities are critical for the role and I developed these a huge amount at university."*

Naomi Owen, BA (Hons) English Language and English Literature graduate



## BA (HONS) APPLIED LINGUISTICS (TOP-UP)

**Location:** City Centre  
**Duration:** 1 year full-time (top up level 6)  
[www.bcu.ac.uk/appliedlinguistics](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/appliedlinguistics)  
**Twitter:** @bcuenglish  
**Blog:** [www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/english/news/blog)

Applied Linguistics seeks to solve real world problems using the application of linguistic theory. It concerns itself with issues of inequity in the relationship between social categories and language.

This can cover areas as diverse as language and the law, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, corpus linguistics, language and discourse and empirical research methods.

This course is designed for independent learners who have a strong interest in, and commitment to, linguistics and its real world applications. You will have the chance to learn about different theories of language acquisition and use, and to apply these theories to legal situations, social situations and educational situations.

In your year here you will cover a range of ways in which theories of language can help solve real world problems. Students in the School have gone on to be TEFL instructors, teachers at all levels, editors and researchers in the social sciences.

**Applicants to this programme will have completed three years of a diploma or degree programme in English and have obtained 240 (or equivalent) credits.**



# FOUNDATION

## OPTIONS

The BA (Hons) English degree courses with a foundation year combine the creative and the critical, the personal and the social, the historical and the contemporary.

Our diverse and creative courses incorporating a foundation year are a must for anyone passionate about English, whether that be language, literature, drama or creative writing.

As part of the foundation year you will develop essential skills and knowledge which will help you succeed in your future degree level studies and which will be transferable to your future career.

You will study a variety of subjects, including language and literature, drama and creative writing, and will learn how these different aspects of English study interact with one another.

Alongside this you will develop core skills in research, critical analysis, planning and evaluation, creativity and effective communication. Understanding how English is studied in context, developing that knowledge and applying it through a range of assignments and assessments, will provide you with a strong foundation upon which to progress to degree-level study at the School of English.

### Foundation routes are available for the following courses

- BA (Hons) English
- BA (Hons) English Literature
- BA (Hons) English and Creative Writing
- BA (Hons) English and Drama
- BA (Hons) English and Journalism
- BA (Hons) English Language and Literature

### Entry requirements:

80 UCAS tariff points from A/AS Levels (or their equivalent)

***"Our study visits were a wonderful opportunity. They helped us research a specific period of literature and highlighted just how much there is available to anyone studying English."***

**Peter Beswick,  
BA (Hons) English with a  
Foundation Year graduate**



# CREATIVE

## CAREERS

A big factor in choosing a degree is whether the course will lead to employment and a good career. Career opportunities in the creative industries are increasing, with employment in the sector growing five times faster than the national economy. Birmingham is famed for its world-class entertainment venues, art galleries and museums and a rich heritage in arts and culture, so where better to study and work than in the UK's second city?

Recent creative degree graduates have progressed onto a range of diverse and rewarding careers, including fashion trend forecasting, curator positions (in museums, galleries and art centres), web development, communication and PR roles, event management or even business owners. Did you know that one in 10 of Birmingham City University alumni started or managed a business after graduating?\* Many students said that collaborating with peers from other creative courses really enriched their learning experience and encouraged them to consider alternative career options.

A creative career isn't limited to conventional industries such as acting or music. Creativity transcends boundaries and is a highly valued skill in roles ranging from project management to marketing. Creative individuals bring fresh ideas and 'outside the box' thinking and offer new solutions to challenging problems. The skills learnt in creative environments translate perfectly to the modern world and can be applied to the most practical of jobs.

\*Hitachi Capital Invoice Finance

# ENTRY

## REQUIREMENTS

112 UCAS tariff points from A/AS Levels with a minimum of 3 A Levels (or their equivalent) including English Language or Literature at Grade C or above.

**For Applied Linguistics, applicants will have completed three years of a diploma or degree programme in English and have obtained 240 (or equivalent) credits.**

***"English is very multi-disciplinary; you learn lots of other subjects at the same time. I'd never done social media marketing before, and initially I didn't think English would help me, but studying both together worked really well. It has also enabled me to have a much clearer direction in terms of a career path."***

**Shuli Ferber, BA (Hons) English graduate**

# COME TO ONE OF OUR OPEN DAYS TO FIND OUT MORE:

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**+44 (0)121 331 5595**

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 [birminghamcityuni](https://www.tiktok.com/birminghamcityuni)