

## Job Description – Lecturer in Creative Writing

---

### **The Role**

The person appointed will be a Central Academic member of staff based within the School of Arts & Humanities in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) at The Open University, Milton Keynes. He or she will contribute to the undergraduate and postgraduate teaching of the School, supporting and leading teams responsible for the production, presentation, assessment and quality assurance of Creative Writing modules and for the interdisciplinary modules to which the School contributes. The postholder will also be expected to contribute to the research profile of the Open University by pursuing original research and/or producing creative work in the field of Creative Writing; this will include involvement with the Contemporary Cultures of Writing research cluster. The successful candidate will be a practising writer in one or more of the following genres: fiction, creative nonfiction and/or scriptwriting.

### **Key responsibilities**

The person appointed will be expected to contribute to the teaching and administration of the School, Faculty and University in the following ways:

#### *Teaching*

- Contribute to teams producing, maintaining and updating Creative Writing modules and qualifications, with a specialism in one or more of the following: fiction, creative nonfiction and/or scriptwriting;
- Support student learning activity through the preparation of assessment materials and participation in Quality Assurance and examination processes.

#### *Research*

- Engage actively in the writing or production of creative works and engage in related research avenues, producing high-quality research outputs, including work of international standard;
- Contribute to research activities and events in the School and Faculty, including those related to the Contemporary Cultures of Writing research cluster;
- Engage in PhD supervision.

## Person Specification

### *Skills, experience and personal abilities/qualities*

#### *Essential*

- A PhD in a relevant subject(s) or a practitioner/publication profile which may be considered equivalent to having a PhD in Creative Writing;
- An established national reputation as a creative writer or being on the way to building such a reputation, writing in one or more of the following genres: fiction, creative nonfiction and/or scriptwriting.
- Experience of teaching Creative Writing in a HE setting, preferably at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels;
- Experience of writing in and teaching one or more of the following genres: fiction, creative nonfiction and/or scriptwriting;
- A working knowledge of publication or performance processes coming from own writing practice;
- The ability and readiness to prepare printed, audio-visual and online module materials; to support modules in presentation through online and face-to-face teaching; and to prepare assessment materials and participate in Quality Assurance and examination processes;
- Experience of online teaching;
- Experience of working as part of a team, e.g. module team involvement (at the OU) or academic team work elsewhere.
- A commitment to equal opportunities policies and practices;
- A commitment to Open University values;
- Evidence of being able to work collaboratively, within an organisation and with external bodies;
- Evidence of excellent communication and organisational skills, including the ability to work to deadlines.

#### *Desirable*

- Planned publication/performance of creative work and other research outputs that will enhance the Department's reputation in the field of Creative Writing;
- Experience of working with or within the Creative Industries, involving such bodies as literary agents, publishers, theatres, film or media companies;
- Experience of bidding for funds and/or participating in scholarly creative writing research projects;
- Experience of having taken the initiative to achieve better teaching and learning, or improving working practices, or taking advantage of new technology;
- Experience of working with and/or producing Creative Writing distance-teaching materials;

- Experience of using and/or developing multimedia teaching materials;
- An interdisciplinary approach in teaching, with a willingness to think across genre/subject boundaries;
- An FE/HE teaching qualification or Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy;
- Research and writing expertise which complements the specialist areas of current Creative Writing staff at the OU;
- A track record of high-quality creative and/or research publications.

## The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)

The Faculty is the largest and most diverse at The Open University, with some 50,000 students studying our modules with excellent completion rates and consistently outstanding student satisfaction ratings. Noted for the strength of our interdisciplinary approaches, our scholars of international standing teach and research a very wide range of topics and themes in specific subject areas, recognized as world class or internationally excellent in the latest Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2014, and having a direct and profound influence on our undergraduate and postgraduate teaching.

From 1 August 2019, the Faculty will be organised into three Schools:

- School of Arts and Humanities
- School of Social Sciences and Global Studies
- School of Psychology & Counselling

Students are supported by three Student Support Teams. These teams offer specialist study support to students undertaking our qualifications across the University. Members of academic staff, including academics based in all four nations of the UK, form part of these teams in sustaining and improving student progression and retention.

The Faculty works closely with important organisations and institutions in the UK and other parts of the world in a range of validated partnerships and collaborations. Engaged in world-class, agenda setting research tackling the most difficult challenges facing us in the 21st Century, with work in numerous subject-based and interdisciplinary research groups and projects.

With c.1800 members of staff comprising academics, associate lecturers, support staff and full-time research students working across the locations of the University, combining originality and innovation in research and curriculum, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is a vibrant and exciting place to study and work.

To find out more about the Faculty's teaching, learning and research, please visit: <http://fass.open.ac.uk/>

### The School of Arts & Humanities

From August 1, the School will consist of approximately 100 academics organised into five disciplines, namely: Art History, English & Creative Writing, Classical Studies, History and Music. In addition to offering single honours qualifications at undergraduate and postgraduate level, the School is proud of its long history of interdisciplinary teaching, epitomised by its BA Arts & Humanities, and its interdisciplinary Level 1 (first year) modules. It also hosts several research centres, has recorded strong performances in REF2014, and actively supports the research and scholarship of its academic staff. To find out more visit the requisite discipline pages, which will be found on the School's web page: <http://fass.open.ac.uk/schools/school-artsand-cultures>

### The Department of English and Creative Writing

The English and Creative Writing Department teaches a wide range of Literature from the Early Modern period to the contemporary, as well as Creative Writing. The Department currently has 23 full-time members of staff, about 7,000 part-time undergraduate students, 657 part-time MA students, and 17 PhD students. Members of the Department write and prepare teaching material for our modules, including printed, audio-visual, and online study guides. The Department has a vibrant and expanding research culture, with members producing research across the full range of the discipline. There are

several thriving research groups, including Contemporary Cultures of Writing. Further information about the English and Creative Writing Department and its work is available on the Department's web site: <http://fass.open.ac.uk/english-creative-writing>

### **Creative Writing**

Creative Writing has been one of the most popular subject areas at the OU, with over 50,000 students having taken modules in the subject since its launch in 2003, when it had a staff of two; it now has eight academic staff, and also employs over 150 practising writers as Associate Lecturers. For more information on Creative Writing at the OU see <http://fass.open.ac.uk/creative-writing>

### **Teaching**

We teach c.2,000 Creative Writing students a year at undergraduate level. The BA (Hons) English Literature and Creative Writing was introduced in 2014 and students can also study Creative Writing as part of BA (Hons) Arts & Humanities (in combination with a variety of other subjects). At level 1 Creative Writing content is in the module Discovering the Arts and Humanities (A111), and in Voices, Texts and Material Culture (A105); there will also be content in a new module, Cultures (A112), from 2020.

The School offers two main Creative Writing undergraduate modules: Creative Writing (A215) at level 2, designed to introduce students to key approaches in the study of Creative Writing, introducing the genres of fiction, poetry and life writing; Advanced Creative Writing (A363) at level 3, which continues with those genres, supplementing them with scriptwriting for screen, stage and radio, and exploring the benefits of thinking across genres. These two modules are being updated and remade over the next three years.

The School also runs a highly successful MA programme in Creative Writing, consisting of a Part 1 module (A802), and a longer Part 2 module (A803). These modules allow for students to study fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction or scriptwriting as their primary genre. In Part 1 they also study a secondary genre for one assessment. There are 500-600 students on the MA programme each year.

Most of our modules are designed for a life of ten or twelve years, subject to regular review and adaptation. They carry either 60 or, in the case of Part 2 of the MA, 120 credit points.

### **Research**

The School has a strong research culture and seeks to support, maintain and develop the research for which it is both nationally and internationally recognised. In the REF 2014 exercise, 26% of the English & Creative Writing Department's research was rated 'world leading', 50% as 'internationally excellent', 23% as 'recognised internationally', and 1% as 'recognised nationally', and it was ranked 36th overall of all English Departments entered. Since that exercise there has been a substantial increase in central Creative Writing staffing numbers and it is expected that Creative Writing outputs, impact case studies and environment factors will feature prominently in the OU's REF2021 submission.

Our Creative Writing PhD programme (first candidate in 2008) has a growing reputation, which has resulted in several publications and funding successes. There are currently 5 Creative Writing PhD students, and there is a keen annual application round. Our membership of the newly formed OOC (Open-Oxford-Cambridge) Doctoral Training Partnership is now providing fresh opportunities for collaboration and aspires to promote excellence in research, postgraduate research training and knowledge exchange in the Arts & Humanities.

Creative Writing research within the School is focused primarily on writing practice, research related to such practice and the various contexts relevant to the creative process. It involves several genres, networking with national and international bodies, and one of its main outlets is the Contemporary

Cultures of Writing Research Group <http://www.open.ac.uk/arts/research/contemporary-cultures-of-writing/>

The School holds regular subject seminars and research conferences and aims to provide an ambitious, flexible and supportive environment for postgraduate study. Research student numbers and completions have increased since REF2014.