

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	MA Screenwriting PG Cert Screenwriting (Level 7)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	PG Dip, PG Cert;
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home school/other teaching departments	Creative Arts, Culture and Communication
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time, 1 year Part-time, 2 years September
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	N/A
Birkbeck Course Code	TMASCRWR_C
HECoS Code	100729
Start date of programme	Autumn 2010
Date of programme approval	Summer 2010
Date of last programme amendment approval	January 2023
Valid for academic entry year	2024-25
Date of last revision to document	16/01/23

Admissions requirements

A second-class honours degree (2:2) or above in any related subject; other qualifications will be considered. Evidence of creative writing in English is required, but applications are encouraged from those with or without prior screenwriting experience.

We welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential.

International entry requirements: If English is not the student's first language or s/he has not previously studied in English, the requirement for this programme is the equivalent of an International English Language Testing System (IELTS Academic Test) score of 7.0, with not less than 6.0 in each of the sub-tests.

Course aims

This screenwriting course offers the opportunity to develop practical screenwriting skills and techniques and to apply them to writing briefs, together with the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of communicating ideas in script form.

Offered as a full-time, one year, and part-time, two year, course, a distinctive feature is a fast-track core module. This introductory module enables graduates in other fields to gain detailed knowledge of screenwriting conventions, an understanding of common formats, and the ability to analyse a brief and evaluate one's own writing within a commercial context. Armed with the core skills of the fast-track course, a subsequent module will develop students' skills in writing a draft script in either film or television formats. Additionally students take 2 core modules, History and Theory of Screenwriting and Scriptwriting in Different Genres, and then choose options on a pathway on developing a feature film script or developing a television series, completing the degree with a final project/portfolio in the medium of their choice.

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
MA Screenwriting, Full-time – 1 year					
7	ARMC043S7	Fast Track to Screenwriting	30	Core	T1-2
7	ARMC044H7	History and Theory of Screenwriting	15	Compulsory	T1
7	FDME004S7	Writing a Draft Script	30	Compulsory	T2-3
7	ARMC048H7	Scriptwriting in Different Genres	15	Compulsory	T3
7	FDME005S7 OR ARMC046S7	EITHER Developing a Feature Film Script OR Developing a TV Series	30	Option	T1 or T2
7		Screenwriting Summer School + industry talks	0	Option	T2
7	ARMC227	Final Project MA Screenwriting	60	Core	T3 and summer

MA Screenwriting, Part-time – 2 years					
Year 1					
L7	ARMC043S7	Fast Track to Screenwriting	30	Core	T1-2
L7	FDME004S7	Writing a Draft Script	30	Compulsory	T2-3
L7	ARMC044H7	History and Theory of Screenwriting	15	Compulsory	T3
L7		Screenwriting Summer School + industry talks	0	Option	T2
Year 2					
L7	ARMC048H7	Scriptwriting in Different Genres	15	Compulsory	T1
7	FDME005S7 ARMC046S7	EITHER Developing a Feature Film Script OR Developing a TV Series	30	Option	T1 or T2
L7	ARMC227D7	Final Project MA Screenwriting	60	Core	T3 & Summer
PG Cert Screenwriting, Part-time, 1 year					
L7	ARMC043S7	Fast Track to Screenwriting	30	Core	T1-2
L7	FDME004S7	Writing a Draft Script	30	Compulsory	T2-3

Core: Module must be taken and passed by student

Compulsory: Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)

Option: Student can choose to take this module

How you will learn

Each full module consists of forty four hours of class work, which will take the form of eleven three-hour weekly meetings and one-to one tutorial provision; and a half module is twenty two hours of class work, usually taking the form of eleven two-hour meetings. Learning is student-centred through workshops, practical exercises, lecturer presentations, individual and group work, discussion and productions, research, evaluation of practice and skills.

Supervision for theoretical modules and projects will be available for student learning. Teaching will be in the form of workshops, lectures, presentations, writing exercises and research methodologies exercises.

How we will assess you

The core theoretical course will be assessed by script research and a written project of no more than 4,000 words. The Final Project/Dissertation will be a 90 – 150 mins Script * or a TV series with accompanying development materials and a 3,000 word critical analysis (total 60 credits) (*The standard evaluation of screenplay length is pages which approximate to running time, in film format this is based with screenwriting layout with one page to one minute, word count is not used because it does not necessarily equate to running time. As regards outlines and treatment, draft scripts and other development materials, the industry also usually uses the number of pages as the guide to length. It is more important that the length be appropriate to the project rather than satisfying a word count).

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

The MA will provide core courses and option modules which will allow the student to:

Subject Specific:

1. Understand the history and theory of screenwriting in national, transnational, international contexts.
2. Understand the practice of screenwriting in a variety of historical, cultural and commercial contexts.
3. Apply theoretical understanding to synthetic practices.
4. Understand the relationship between conceptualising ideas and using practical (screenwriting) formats to realise them.
5. Analyse the different ways in which creative practice developments have been conceptualised.
6. Be able to relate the theoretical and professional discourses of screenwriting.
7. Create connections between the history, theory and practices of screenwriting and the history and theory of film and media.
8. Understand the historical, social and political context of media production, markets and institutions.
9. Have knowledge of mainstream media forms and alternatives to the mainstream, of media genres and national and international movements.
10. Analyse a creative brief and to identify appropriate creative models.
11. Apply screenwriting techniques to the communication of ideas in specific formats.
12. Write complex scripts in the formats chosen

Intellectual:

13. Assess a wide variety of information in media form, and to communicate ideas in the appropriate script format
14. Plan own learning and skill development.
15. Analyse the effectiveness of their own creative work.
16. Be able to integrate abstract conceptual frameworks and knowledge with creative and practical production skills.

Practical:

17. Through discussion groups and through team work, develop the ability to work with others and to respect their views.
18. Ability to write clearly and concisely.
19. Ability to make informed decisions.
20. Produce a portfolio with drafts of scripts and development materials.

Personal and Social

21. Demonstrate interpersonal skills such as the ability to work in a group or as a member of a team.
22. Take responsibility for own learning and time management.
23. Find creative solutions to problems.
24. Work under pressure.

Careers and further study

Graduates can pursue career paths in the creative industries, such as screenwriting, script editing and collaborating with readers/directors/producers/co-writers. Possible professions include:

- screenwriter
- script writer
- creative writer
- magazine or newspaper journalist
- English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher
- higher education lecturer.

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website](#).

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations and Policies](#) published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services](#). This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

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