

MA Nature and Travel Writing

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Awarding institution	Bath Spa University
Teaching institution	Bath Spa University
School	School of Writing, Publishing and Humanities
Main campus	Newton Park: NB low-residency course, mostly taught online and on residenceals.
Other sites of delivery	See above
Other Schools involved in delivery	N/A
Name of award(s)	Nature and Travel Writing
Qualification (final award)	MA
Intermediate awards available	PGCert, PGDip
Routes available	Single
Duration of award	Two-year low residency
Sandwich period	N/A
Modes of delivery offered	Low residency
Regulatory Scheme[1]	Taught Postgraduate Framework
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body accreditation	N/A

Date of most recent PSRB approval (month and year)	N/A
Renewal of PSRB approval due (month and year)	N/A
UCAS code	N/A
Route code (SITS)	Not Known
Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements (including date of publication)	There is no QAA benchmark statement for this course
Date of most recent approval	March 2016
Date specification last updated	January 2024

[1]This should also be read in conjunction with the University's Qualifications Framework

Programme Overview

The **MA in Nature and Travel Writing** at Bath Spa University is designed for writers who wish to develop their skills and experience in creative non-fiction, inspired by the natural world and contemporary travelling. This course will explore these topics and students will be immersed in a literature that covers travel writing, nature writing and examples from a range of other genres, to provide a context, backdrop and perspective to their own work. They will also receive practical advice, and do specific assignments, on how to get their work published, from a range of sources including their tutors and other professionals working in the field.

Bath Spa University has long been recognised as a pioneer and leading provider in the teaching of creative writing at undergraduate and postgraduate level. When Creative Studies in English began here in 1988-89, it was one of the very first undergraduate creative writing programmes in the country. The MA Travel and Nature Writing has become one of the most highly respected courses of its type.

The full MA course consists of six modules: two on Creative Writing, one Context Module, one on Professional Skills and a double module consisting of a Portfolio and Reflective Journal.

Programme Aims

- 1 The programme aims to provide students with an understanding of issues and approaches to the representations of peoples, other species, habitats, places, cultures and environments in various kinds of writing, which can then be applied to their own practice.
- 2 The main focus of the MA is on developing the students' skills and experience as a writer through a combination of exercises, workshops, seminars and lectures, held online and during intensive residential courses.
- 3 Another important focus is on the students' Professional Skills: their ability to understand and research the market for their work; to approach potential publishers, editors, commissioners and agents; and to prepare their work for submission. This is achieved through a combination of assignments, seminars and lectures, and a programme of guest speakers, including authors as well as industry professionals.
- 4 To give the students a deeper understanding of the context, history and genres of travel and nature writing, through seminars, lectures and discussions; and via the course Reading List.
- 5 To give them the tools to workshop one another's writing in an appropriate manner, using specific techniques of constructive criticism; and to enable them to respond to constructive criticism of their own written work.

6 Through the final 20,000-word Portfolio and Reflective Journal, to enable students to compile a substantial body of written work which they can submit for publication, both during and after the course.

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

(NB These ILOs are at level 7 of the FHEQ)

A Subject-specific Skills and Knowledge

A1 planned and completely or substantially written a varied portfolio of short pieces or a single manuscript of travel and/or nature writing

A2 written short pieces of travel and/or nature writing suitable for class discussion and workshopping

A3 engaged in precise, analytical, critical and sensitive group discussion of various aspects of their own and other students' creative writing, in a variety of settings including in-person seminar and online workshop

A4 engaged in analytical class discussion of selected examples of travel and nature writing, with a view to comparing their own work with these examples and identifying strengths and weaknesses in consequence

A5 identified and analysed problems and challenges arising from their own choices of form, genre and subject-matter, and developed practical responses to those challenges

A6 carried out, as appropriate, research in support of their chosen mode of creative writing

A7 carried out writing in the field, making use of notes and short draft material, and developed those notes through editing and expansion

A8 engaged with the professional context relevant to their chosen mode of writing; considered their relationship as writers to the relevant cultural industries

B Cognitive and Intellectual Skills

B1 Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively.

B2 Demonstrate self-direction and originality.

B3 Plan and investigate a research problem.

B4 Carry through an independent study or project that could form the foundation of further study or employment in writing.

C Skills for Life and Work

C1 Autonomous learning (including time management) that demonstrates the exercise of initiative, personal responsibility and decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations and the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development

C2 Team working skills necessary to succeed in the global workplace, with an ability both to work in and lead teams effectively, as well as the ability to act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level

C3 Communication skills that show the ability to communicate clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences knowledge at, or informed by, the forefront of the academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice, and the conclusions drawn from dealing with complex issues systematically

C4 IT skills and digital literacy that demonstrate the ability to develop new skills to a high level and to approach complex issues systematically and creatively

Intermediate awards

PgCert Intended Learning Outcomes

[A2-A8; B1-B2; C2-C4

PgDip Intended Learning Outcomes

A2-A8; B1-B4; C1-C4

Programme content

This programme comprises the following modules

Key:

Core = C

Required = R

Required* = R*

Optional = O

Not available for this status = N/A

If a particular status is greyed out, it is not offered for this programme.

Subject offered as single and/or joint programme

MA Travel and Nature Writing				Status	
Level	Code	Title	Credits	Single	Joint
7	CW7505-30	Writing in the Field	30	C	
7	CW7506-30	Context, History & Genres in Creative Non-Fiction	30	C	
7	CW7502-30	Advanced Travel and Nature Writing	30	C	
7	CW7503-30	Professional Skills in Travel and Nature Writing	30	C	
7	CW7507-60	Portfolio and Reflective Journal	60	C	

Assessment methods

A range of summative assessment tasks will be used to test the Intended Learning Outcomes in each module. These are indicated in the attached assessment map which shows which tasks are used in which modules.

Students will be supported in their development towards summative assessment by appropriate formative exercises.

Work experience and placement opportunities

N/A

Additional Costs Table

Module Code & Title	Type of Cost	Cost
CW7505-30 Writing in the Field	Accommodation and subsistence for a residential event that launches the course	approximately £400
CW7505-30 Writing in the Field	Travel to residential event	dependent on location of student

Graduate Attributes

	Bath Spa Graduates...	In MA Nature and Travel Writing , we enable this...
1	Will be employable: equipped with the skills necessary to flourish in the global workplace, able to work in and lead teams	Will be equipped to write to a publishable level, as informed by knowledge of relevant techniques and professional skills and contexts
2	Will be able to understand and manage complexity, diversity and change	Will have experience in and understanding of the complex technical, emotional and intellectual challenges presented by the writing and publishing of creative writing in a diverse and rapidly changing cultural and social context
3	Will be creative: able to innovate and to solve problems by working across disciplines as professional or artistic practitioners	Will be able to innovate and solve problems through their understanding and practice of creative writing
4	Will be digitally literate: able to work at the interface of creativity and technology	Will be digitally literate and able to work at the interface of technology and creativity through the largely online nature of the course

5	Will be internationally networked: either by studying abroad for part of the their programme, or studying alongside students from overseas	The course is open to people from all over the world, and regularly attracts students from overseas, who offer differing contexts for home-based students to understand and appreciate
6	Will be creative thinkers, doers and makers	Creativity is at the heart of the subject
7	Will be critical thinkers: able to express their ideas in written and oral form, and possessing information literacy	This is also at the heart of the subject, and is achieved via honing their skills in workshops, tutorials and constructive criticism of their own and others' work
8	Will be ethically aware: prepared for citizenship in a local, national and global context	Will fulfil these requirements through the contextual discussions and assignments, and the questions arising from analysis of their own and other writers' work

Modifications

Module-level modifications

Code	Title	Nature of modification	Date(s) of approval and approving bodies	Date modification comes into effect
CW75 03-30	Professional Skills in Travel and Nature Writing	Dependent on lockdown and travel restrictions, students planning a self-organised trip may have to remain in the UK or, in extreme circumstances, do a plan and report on a virtual, rather than actual, trip.	Autumn 2020; School of Creative Industries	2020-21
CW75 06-30	Context, History and Genres	Change of Trimester	approved by the Creative Industries SQMC 30th November 2020	2021/22

CW75 02-30	Advanced Travel and Nature Writing	Change of Trimester	approved by the Creative Industries SQMC 30th November 2020	2021/22
CW75 03-30	Professional Skills in Travel and Nature Writing	Assessment weighting change	approved by the Creative Industries SQMC 30th November 2020	2021/22
CW75 05-30	Writing in the Field	No longer an optional module for Environmental Humanities	approved April 2021	2021/22
CW75 03-30 and CW75 02-30	Professional Skills in Travel and Nature Writing Advanced Travel and Nature Writing	Assessment reduced from 3 to 2	approved November 2021	2021/22
CW75 08-60	Portfolio and Reflective Journal	Added	Approved at the School of Writing, Publishing and the Humanities SQMC, 23 November 2022	2022/23
CW75 05-30 CW75 06-30 CW75 02-30 CW75 03-30 CW75 08-60	Writing in the Field Context, History & Genres in Creative Non-Fiction Advanced Travel and Nature Writing Professional Skills in Travel and Nature Writing Portfolio and Reflective Journal	Trimester change	Approved at the School of Writing, Publishing and the Humanities SQMC, 23 November 2022	2022/23

CW75 05-30	Writing in the Field	Minor edits across modules to provide better clarity to students.	Approved at the School of Writing, Publishing and the Humanities SQMC, 23 November 2024	2024/25
CW75 06-30	Context, History & Genres in Creative Non-Fiction			
CW75 02-30	Advanced Travel and Nature Writing			
CW75 03-30	Professional Skills in Travel and Nature Writing			
CW75 07-60	Portfolio and Reflective Journal			

Programme-level modifications

Nature of modification	Date(s) of approval and approving bodies	Date modification comes into effect
Changed title of programme to Nature and Travel Writing	Approved by Curriculum Committee, December 2020	2021/22
Removal or change to the routes/duration/modes	Approved at the School of Writing, Publishing and the Humanities SQMC, 23 November 2022	2022/23

Attached as appendices:

1. Programme structure diagram
2. Map of module outcomes to level/programme outcomes
3. Assessment map
4. Module descriptors

Appendix 1: Programme Structure Diagram – MA Nature and Travel Writing

	Trimester One	Trimester Two	Trimester Three
Year One	CW7505-30 Writing in the Field	CW7503-30 Professional Skills in Travel and Nature Writing	Preparation for CW7507-60 Portfolio & Reflective Journal
Year Two	CW7502-30 Advanced Travel & Nature Writing	CW7506-30 Context, History & Genres	CW7507-60 Portfolio & Reflective Journal

Appendix 2: Map of Intended Learning Outcomes

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Status (C,R,R*,O)	Intended Learning Outcomes															
				Subject-specific Skills and Knowledge								Cognitive and Intellectual Skills				Skills for Life and Work			
				A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	B1	B2	B3	B4	C1	C2	C3	C4
7	CW7505-30	Writing in the Field	C		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X
7	CW7506-30	Context, History & Genres in Creative Non-Fiction	C				X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
7	CW7502-30	Advanced Travel and Nature Writing	C		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X
7	CW7503-30	Professional Skills in Travel and Nature Writing	C		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X
7	CW7507-60	Portfolio and Reflective Journal	C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

[4] C = Core; R = Required; R* = Required*; O = Optional

Appendix 3: Map of Summative Assessment Tasks by Module

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Status (C,R,R*,O)	Assessment method															
				Coursework						Practical					Written Examination				
				Composition	Dissertation	Essay	Journal	Portfolio	Report	Performance	Practical Project	Practical skills	Presentation	Set exercises	Written Examination	In-class test (seen)	In-class test (unseen)		
7	CW7505-30	Writing in the Field	C	1 x 4000 words		1 x 4000 words													
7	CW7506-30	Context, History & Genres in Creative Non-Fiction	C	1 x 4000 words		1 x 4000 words													

7	CW7502-30	Advanced Travel and Nature Writing	C	3 x 1000 words								1 x (equivalent to 1,500 words)				
7	CW7503-30	Professional Skills in Travel and Nature Writing	C						1x (2000 words) 1 x (3500 words)							
7	CW7507-60	Portfolio and Reflective Journal	C					1 x 16-20,000 words)								

[5] C = Core; R = Required; R* = Required*; O = Optional