BA in English Literature
Single, Dual and Combined Honours
Wide-ranging, flexible and rewarding, English Literature degrees at Sheffield foster your love of literature, film, theatre and beyond, developing your critical and ethical thinking, and inspiring your creative imagination.

We are incredibly proud of the students we have educated, and of our internationally esteemed, civic-minded university.

What our students say

“ I’ve made great friends, studied something I love in the way I want to study it, in a department which supports me, and had a pretty good time along the way. ”

“ Overall, I would say my studies have completely changed me. When I started here, I was shy and lacking confidence in my abilities. I feel I have blossomed into a more vocal and competent communicator. If I were to recommend this course and University to anybody, I’d do it with honesty and passion, as I feel it has nurtured me as an individual. ”

“ Lecturers are fantastic: passionate, eloquent and inspiring. ”

“ Innovative teaching, excellent resources and varied assessment methods make the course extremely diverse. The support networks that are in place, such as the personal tutor scheme and office hours, help you to reflect upon your learning and progress. ”
Who we are

We are researchers, writing the books and articles that advance the study of literature and culture from the origins of the English language to the present day. We are deeply committed to education. We are not committed simply to teaching you, but to working collegially with and alongside you. The roots of the word research are in “seeking out”, or even “seeking out with intensity”, and we encourage you to come to university to be part of a community asking out knowledge.

To say we are committed to education is also to emphasise our belief that when we guide your education we do not educate you alone, but that we are all participating in a larger ecology of ideas, of ethics and of commitment back out into the world.

That is one reason why as a School and as a University we are rightly famed for our engagement with the public, both locally and on the international stage.

Our centres for research demonstrate the breadth of our interests: the History of the Gothic; the Research of Film; Cold War Cultures; Archival Practice; Poetry and Poetics; Medical Humanities; and a recent development in the discipline, Animal Studies, which challenges the presumption that humans are exceptional amongst species.

Who you are

We ask that you are prepared to work hard, that you remain attentive to your reading and viewing, and to the wider world around you, that you think deeply and with patience, and that you maintain an open mind: be curious; ask questions; think critically and creatively.
The Creative Arts

We need something to read, to watch, and to contemplate of course, so we are as interested in creativity as we are in criticism. Our tradition of fostering creative writing stretches back to the appointments of Angela Carter as a writer-in-residence, and the poet and critic Professor Sir William Empson. We’re proud to continue that tradition with a teaching team led by Professor of Poetry Simon Armitage.

We provide a forum for your work as writers and editors in the online and print journal Route57. We work hard to develop connections with poets, presses, and arts organizations, including the Man Booker Prize, Bank Street Arts and Off the Shelf.

Our Recognition

“1st for Research Environment” REF 2014

We’re one of the largest and most successful English departments in the UK. We conduct ground-breaking research, maintain strong links with our local community, and work with students who love being here.

In the Research Excellence Framework 2014, 82% of the School’s research activities and outputs were judged world leading (4*) and internationally excellent (3*). In terms of the research quality for our size (our research power), this result ranks us 12th out of 89 departments in the UK.

The School of English’s research environment has been judged to be the best for English in the country (1st out of 89 departments; with a combined score of 4* in 90% and 3* in 10% of our activities). This result means that our School offers outstanding support for academic staff and students at all levels to work closely and successfully to pursue research and scholarship across the field of English studies.

The impact outside the academy of the research conducted in the School has been judged to be valuable and strong: 100% of our impact activities scored 4* and 3*. This combined result places the School 1st out of 89 departments in the UK.
Our Degrees

Degrees
English Literature (Q306)
English & Theatre (QW34)

Flexible Dual Degrees
English & History (QV31)
English & Philosophy (QV35)
English & Music (QW33)
English & French (QR31)
English & German (QR32)
English & Hispanic Studies (QR34)
English & Russian (QR37)
Biblical Literature & English (QV36)

and our Combined Honours Triple Degree (Y001).

The structure of the BA English Literature degree.
You take three modules per semester and there are two semesters per year, so six modules per year. Students taking English Literature and a modern language will spend one year overseas after their second year, before returning to our third year modules to complete the four year degree.

The core modules.
Our single honours English Literature students take all of our core modules. Our expertise suggests these modules give you the breadth of knowledge and ways of thinking necessary to the degree being awarded.

The optional modules.
Our optional modules tend to focus more on an idea, a particular tradition, a shorter period of history, or otherwise encourage a detailed exploration of a research interest.

The structure of the BA English Literature Flexible Dual Honours and Combined Honours Triple degrees.
If you want to concentrate on one subject in your programme, you may decide to study more of one subject than another. For all Arts and Humanities subjects, you now have this option, as part of the dual honours. You can choose to divide your degree so that one third is the minor subject and two thirds is the major subject. You must take at least one core module from the School of English per semester.
Our 1st Year Optional Modules
- Early American Literature
- Techniques of Performance
- Creative Writing
- Celtic Languages & Literatures
- Introduction to Cinema
- Introduction to Theatre
- Techniques of Performance
- Practical Stylistics
- Critical Contexts
- Hollywood Cinema
- Marx, Darwin, Freud
- Early Englishes
- Plus you can take two modules outside the School of English

Our 2nd & 3rd Year Optional Modules
- Afro-American Literature to 1940
- Afro-American Literature 2: 1940 to the Present
- Women’s Autobiography
- Literary Mad Scientists: From Frankenstein to Einstein
- War on Screen
- Theory/Contingency
- Literature & Nonsense
- No Animals Were Harmed in the Making of this Module
- Irish Fiction
- The Graphic Novel
- Creative Writing Poetry
- Writing Fiction
- The Idea of America
- Introduction to Modern Irish
- Writing the Real
- America & the Avant-Garde
- The Elegy
- Radical Texts
- Introduction to Old English
- Creating Poetry
- Christopher Marlowe
- America in the 1960s
- Darwin & the Nineteenth-Century Novel
- Secrets & Lies: Victorian Life-Writing
- Creative Writing Prose Fiction
- Satire & Print in the Eighteenth Century
- The History of Persuasion
- Introduction to Middle English
- European Gothic
- Love & Death: The Films of Woody Allen
- Adaptation: Theory & Practice
- Sites of Performance
- Performing Shakespeare
- Radical Theory
- Chaucer’s Comic Tales
- Cold War Fiction
- Shakespeare on Film
- John Donne
- Representing the Holocaust
- Post-War British Realist Cinema
- Byron & Shelley
- Imagining the North
- Sex & Decadence in Restoration Theatre
- Fin de Siècle Gothic
- Interdisciplinary Research in Practice
- Dissertation

The content of our courses is reviewed annually to make sure it is current and relevant. Individual modules may be updated or withdrawn in response to discoveries through our world-leading research, funding changes, professional accreditation requirements, student or employer feedback, curriculum review, staff availability, and variations in student numbers. In the event of a material change the University will inform students in good time and will take reasonable steps to minimise disruption.
Thoughts

We offer these final passages without comment, since you will have thoughts of your own.

A crisis forces us back to the questions themselves and requires from us either new or old answers, but in any case direct judgments. A crisis becomes a disaster only when we respond to it with preformed judgments, that is, with prejudices. Such an attitude not only sharpens the crisis but makes us forfeit the experience of reality and the opportunity for reflection it provides.

**Hannah Arendt**, The Crisis of Education

Speech cannot be personal and poetic when there is embarrassment of self-revelation, including revelation to oneself, nor when there is animal diffidence and communal suspicion, shame of exhibition and eccentricity, clinging to social norms. Speech cannot be initiating when the chief social institutions are bureaucratized and predetermine all procedures and decisions, so that in fact individuals have no power anyway that is useful to express. Speech cannot be explanatory and heuristic when pervasive chronic anxiety keeps people from risking losing themselves in temporary confusion and from relying for help precisely on communicating, even if the communication is Babel.

**Paul Goodman**, Compulsory Miseducation

*It is this deep blankness is the real thing strange.*
*The more things happen to you the more you can’t Tell or remember even what they were.*

*The contradictions cover such a range.*
*The talk would talk and go so far aslant.*
*You don’t want madhouse and the whole thing there.*

**William Empson**, Let It Go
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