



Durham  
University

# English Studies

**Postgraduate study opportunities 2012/13**

World-class taught and research degrees to PhD

**Ranked 3rd**

for English by *The Independent  
Complete University Guide 2012.*



# English Studies

The Department of English Studies is one of the best in the country. We offer a unique learning experience in a beautiful environment. Our work combines a strong sense of tradition with a commitment to innovation and new approaches, and we have a particular strength in interdisciplinary research.

## ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The strength and breadth of the Department's research were recognised in the most recent Research Assessment Exercise which judged it to be of international standing. 60% of our research was considered to be either 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent' in terms of its originality, significance and rigour. The Department's research environment was rated as 'world-leading', and we have also been rated 'excellent', for the quality of our teaching.

Students in English Studies can choose specialised topics across the whole range of the subject area from the Anglo-Saxon period to the present day. The Department provides an intimate, dynamic and supportive environment in which to undertake a postgraduate degree and offers the most up-to-date training in methods and skills. It consists at present of 25 permanent members of academic staff, who produce research of the highest international calibre. We strive to connect with both the local community and a global network of students, scholars, artists and professionals.

The Department is consistently rated as one of the top UK English departments by *The Times Good University Guide*. The Department's work ethos is that teaching and research should complement one another at all levels

of academic enquiry. A postgraduate degree in English Studies, therefore enables students to consolidate their existing skills and interests, whilst at the same time exploring the cutting edge of the discipline.

## POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREES

- MA by Research (1 year full-time/ 2 years part-time – 50,000 words in length)
- MLitt (2 years full-time/4 years part-time – 70,000 words in length)
- PhD (3 years full-time/6 years part-time – 100,000 words in length).

## MAIN AREAS OF RESEARCH

- Medieval Literature, in particular Chaucer, Malory, Romance, Arthurian literature, Drama and Debate, Old Norse and Old English, Anglo-Norman and Anglo-Latin, the History of Ideas
- Renaissance and Seventeenth Century Literature, in particular Renaissance Drama, Sidney, Milton, the Early-Modern Novel, the Reception of Classical Texts
- Eighteenth Century Literature, in particular Fiction, Women's Writing, Sensibility and Burney
- Romantic Literature, in particular Blake, Godwin, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Edgeworth, Scott, Shelley, Mary Shelley, Keats, Women's Writing, and Romantic Aesthetics

# 60%

of our research is considered to be 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent'.  
RAE 2008

- Victorian Literature, in particular Dickens, the Brontës, Gaskell, Ruskin, Gissing, the Pre-Raphaelites, Literature and the Visual Arts, Fin-de-Siècle Writing, Victorian Gothic, Adaptation and Afterlives
- Modern Literature, in particular H. G. Wells, Edwardian Fiction, T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and Bloomsbury, Poetry of the 1930s, D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, Thomas Pynchon, Toni Morrison, British, Irish and American poetry, African-American Fiction, Jewish-American Fiction, Post-war Fiction, Literary magazines, Terrorism in fiction and film
- Literary and Critical Theory, in particular Postmodernism, Deconstruction, Ecocriticism, The Frankfurt School, Literary Aesthetics and Poetics, Psychoanalysis, Gender Studies, Representations of the Self, the Body, and Consciousness.

We are also happy to supervise research in the following broad areas: American Literature, Irish Literature, Australian Literature, History of the Book and Bibliography, Genre Studies, Literature and Science, Medical Humanities, Literature and Philosophy, Utopian Studies.

We have a lively programme of speakers and research seminars throughout the academic year, and strong connections



with the Institute of Advanced Study and the Institute of Medieval and Renaissance Studies. We also play a leading role in the Centre for Medical Humanities, the Centre for Seventeenth Century Studies, and the Basil Bunting Centre for Modern Poetry and Poetics. Public lecture series have included 'Madness, Creativity and the Arts'; 'The Body and the Arts'; 'Venice and the Cultural Imagination since 1800'; and 'The Persistence of Beauty'. The Institute of Advanced Study holds an annual postgraduate conference. We host the online journal *Postgraduate English* and our students contribute to the running of the interdisciplinary journal, *Kaleidoscope*.

We regularly host international conferences and symposia on themes ranging from medieval to the modern, often with an interdisciplinary emphasis. Recent events have included: the World Viking Studies Saga Conference; the Ford Madox Ford Society Conference; James Joyce and the Nineteenth Century; Toni Morrison: New Directions; the Evolution of Literature; Cosmopoetics; and conferences sponsored by the International Arthurian Society and the Society for Medieval Languages and Literature.

#### RECENT THESIS/DISSERTATION TITLES

- "Writing the Body: Chaucer, Henryson and Dunbar"
- "Sons and Brothers: Literary Community in the English Poetic Tradition c1377–1547"
- "The Ministry of Song: Unmarried Women's Hymn Writing 1760–1936"
- "Airy Children of the Brain: Emotion, Science, and the Legacy of Eighteenth Century Science in the Shelley Circle 1812–1821"
- "Unsatisfied Appeal of Sense: The Decadent Image in the Poetry and Poetics of Oscar Wilde, Arthur Symons and Ernest Dowson"
- "The Elegies of Ted Hughes"
- "Narrative and The Afterlife in Modern Fiction"
- "A Theory of Irony: Derrida and Parabasis".

#### POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH RESOURCES

- A dedicated postgraduate computer room in Hallgarth House, with links to the main University network
- A subsidised inter-library loan service
- Easy access to the University and Cathedral libraries which contain special collections of medieval

manuscripts, early printed books, and works of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

- Unique modern materials, including the Abbot and Plomer collections, the Basil Bunting Archive and the Poetry Society archive
- A wide range of online resources
- Online journal *Postgraduate English*
- Dedicated postgraduate reading groups and conferences
- Regular research seminars, symposia and lecture series
- Institute of Advanced Study events and networks
- Opportunities to participate in the seminars, events and postgraduate groups hosted by the Institute of Medieval and Renaissance Studies and the Centre for Medical Humanities
- The opportunity to teach, and to be trained in teaching, at undergraduate level
- The Department has a Research Assistantships scheme in which selected postgraduate researchers are paid to help with the research project of a member of staff
- Subject-specific training

- Access to the numerous courses offered by the University's Doctoral Training Programme
- Faculty training on post-doctoral life: preparing a CV, research statement and a teaching portfolio, job applications, interviews, accepting a job offer and getting published
- IT and study facilities
- Research student travel fund
- Regular readings by poets and writers
- Opportunities to participate in high-quality student drama, music, creative writing and sport.

#### ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

You will normally require an Honours degree (at least a 2:1) or its equivalent and (for the MLitt or PhD) a Masters degree from a recognised university. When submitting your application you will need to include a piece of written work approximately 1,200 words in length on a literary subject. This can be any piece of work you have completed during the last two years.

Applications should be made via the University online application form which can be found at [www.durham.ac.uk/postgraduate/apply](http://www.durham.ac.uk/postgraduate/apply)

#### FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

- AHRC (two available)
- Durham Doctoral Studentship scheme.

The University also has a range of funding opportunities for postgraduate students. To find out what support you could be eligible to receive see our online funding database at [www.durham.ac.uk/postgraduate/finance/search](http://www.durham.ac.uk/postgraduate/finance/search)

#### TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

- MA in English Literary Studies
- MA in Medieval and Renaissance Literary Studies
- MA in Romantic and Victorian Literary Studies
- MA in Twentieth Century Literary Studies
- MA in Studies in Poetry.

One of the many strengths of our taught MA provision is that it offers both choice and flexibility, providing the opportunity to learn from the rich variety of research expertise in the Department and the chance to specialise in a particular area of literary study.

The MA programmes offer training in research skills and a wide range of literature modules from which you choose

three; you will also write a dissertation. You will have the opportunity to follow up particular interests by studying a named pathway, or to designate your own area of study within the MA in English Literary Studies, tailoring an individual programme based on period, theme or genre.

If you choose to take one of the named pathways, you will be expected to select two modules from those available within a pathway and to write your dissertation in an area related to your named pathway. You need not confine your choices to a named pathway, but may choose any three from the full list of modules on offer if you prefer. Students may, with permission, take one module from other modules on offer in the Arts Faculty. All students must take the core Research Methods and Resources module and the dissertation.

#### TYPICAL MODULES 2012–2013

- Research Methods and Resources
- Dissertation
- The Anglo-Saxon World, AD 400–1100
- Old Norse
- Warrior Poets in Heroic Societies
- Narrative Transformations: Medieval Romance to Renaissance Epic



- Middle English Manuscripts and Texts
- Renaissance Tragedy
- Women and the Novel in the Eighteenth Century
- Reflections on Revolution, 1789–1922
- Second-Generation Romantic Poetry
- Romantic Forms of Grief
- Women in Victorian Poetry and Painting
- Elegy: from John Milton to Seamus Heaney
- Literary Masculinity at the Fin-de-Siècle
- James Joyce and the Limits of Literature
- The Literatures of Slavery
- Thomas Pynchon
- Representing the Self: from Sophocles to the Sopranos
- Writing Poetry.

The current list is subject to staff availability and may alter.

Further information and a current module list is available on our website at [www.durham.ac.uk/english.studies/postgrad/taught](http://www.durham.ac.uk/english.studies/postgrad/taught)

Please use the ‘additional comments’ section of the application form to indicate your choice of modules.

#### TYPICAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

- You will normally require an English or English-related Honours degree (at least a 2:1) or equivalent from a recognised university.

In addition to your three module choices, you may also need to supply a piece of written work of approximately 1,200 words in length on a literary subject. This can be any piece of literary-critical work you have completed recently and may be emailed direct to the Department if you wish

([english.pgadmissions@durham.ac.uk](mailto:english.pgadmissions@durham.ac.uk)). Should you also wish to be considered for the ‘Writing Poetry’ module, you will also need to send samples of your own poetic compositions.

#### FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

- AHRC (one available)
- Faculty MA Scholarships award scheme.

The University also has a range of funding opportunities for postgraduate students. To find out what support you could be eligible to receive see our online funding database at [www.durham.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/fees/search](http://www.durham.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/fees/search)

#### ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL PROGRAMMES

We welcome applications from overseas students for our taught and research programmes, who should be proficient in spoken and written English. We prefer IELTS, with a minimum overall score of 7.0 including a 6.5 in writing; or TOEFL PBT (paper-based): 625; or IBT (internet-based) 113. Successful applicants may also wish to consider a Pre-Sessional English course at the Language Centre in Durham: [www.durham.ac.uk/language.centre/englishlanguage/presessional](http://www.durham.ac.uk/language.centre/englishlanguage/presessional)

We welcome applications from holders of international qualifications. For advice on the equivalency of international qualifications and further information on English language requirements, please contact our International Office on [international.office@durham.ac.uk](mailto:international.office@durham.ac.uk) or visit our website at [www.durham.ac.uk/international](http://www.durham.ac.uk/international)

#### CAREERS AND EMPLOYABILITY

For further information on career options and employability, including the results of the Destination of Leavers survey, student and employer testimonials and details of work experience and study abroad opportunities, please visit [www.durham.ac.uk/english.studies/postgraduate/employability](http://www.durham.ac.uk/english.studies/postgraduate/employability)

Name:  
**Alexandra Davis**

Home Country:  
**UK**

Postgraduate Course:  
**MA English Literary Studies**

I was an undergraduate here at Durham; for me the teaching was inspiring and I felt that undergraduate study was not enough – I needed to progress to the next level. The reputation of the Department and the friendly, supportive collegiate system were vital in my decision to continue my studies here. The taught nature of the course also meant that I had a unique opportunity to study with some leading scholars of my chosen field, who have been inspiring and great fun to work with.

Seminars are a vital part of the teaching here, providing the opportunity to discuss in small groups literature or themes which most interest you. Everyone is like-minded and enthusiastic about what they are studying. The teachers are inspiring and always helpful and friendly, whilst being incredibly knowledgeable and passionate about their respective subjects.

My time at Durham has been intellectually and socially stimulating. There is an excellent postgraduate social life at Durham and I have made many friends from both my college and my course. It is great fun being part of Durham’s tradition, yet I have maintained the freedom to explore the beautiful countryside of County Durham and city life of Newcastle.

Durham is almost unrivalled in its beauty, and offers a great balance between the highest academic standard where you will be surrounded by like-minded intelligent people, and a diverse range of extra-curricular opportunities, be it sport, music, drama, or volunteering, to name only a few. It has definitely been the best years of my life so far – altogether unforgettable!



## Contact details

For further information on taught programmes or research degrees contact:

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