

## Programme specification

### 1. Overview/ factual information

<b>Programme/award title(s)</b>	CertHE Writing For Performance
<b>Teaching Institution</b>	Ruskin College
<b>Awarding Institution</b>	The Open University (OU)
<b>Date of latest OU validation</b>	March 2013
<b>Next revalidation</b>	2017-18
<b>Credit points for the award</b>	120 Credits at Level 4
<b>UCAS Code</b>	WP89
<b>Programme start date</b>	September 2010
<b>Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)</b>	NAWE Creative Writing (2008) Dance, drama and performance (2007)
<b>Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes</b>	Not applicable
<b>Professional/statutory recognition</b>	Not applicable
<b>Duration of the programme for each mode of study (P/T, FT,DL)</b>	One year (three terms) full-time Two years (six terms) part-time
<b>Dual accreditation (if applicable)</b>	Not applicable
<b>Date of production/revision of this specification</b>	April 2013

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content, and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in student module guide(s) and the student's handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

#### 2.1 Educational aims and objectives

2.1.1 Students can progress from Ruskin College Short Courses onto the Ruskin College CertHE Writing for Performance, and then to the Foundation Degree Writing for Performance.

2.1.2 The Ruskin College CertHE in Writing for Performance aims to provide a course which will enable students to develop the skills and knowledge needed to progress on to the level 5 FdA Writing for Performance and then on to finding work in the literary and performing arts fields as well as training and developing their creative talent.

2.1.3 Most of the course tutors are teachers and writers who have a portfolio of skills with which to find all kinds of writing work and to survive in what is a particularly competitive career. Because of this they are ideally placed to help students develop skills as writers and learn how to apply them to a range of opportunities.

2.1.4 Working alongside other writers and in writerly environments will enable students to hone their own skills as writers and produce work, which is realistically attuned to the needs of the industry.

2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards  
(Where the award is part of a hierarchy of awards/programmes, this section describes the articulation between them, opportunities for progression upon completion of the programme, and arrangements for bridging modules or induction)

**2.2.1** The College's aim to provide non-traditional students with opportunities for study at honours degree level results in students receiving places at Ruskin with few or no prior qualifications. Successful applicants for the CertHE Writing for Performance programme may be encouraged to attend a selection of short courses offered by Ruskin each year and this is sometimes a condition of their offer of a place.

**2.2.2** The College offers progression for successful CertHE Writing for Performance students onto the FdA Writing for Performance.

### 3. Programme outcomes

Intended learning outcomes are listed below.

3A. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p><b>A successful learner from this programme will be able to:</b>            A1: Demonstrate understanding of the underlying concepts and principles associated with the generation of texts.            A2: Demonstrate a practical understanding of the collaborative nature of writing/ scriptwriting, including revising, proofing and editing their own work and that of other people.            A3: Understand and appreciate how to structure a script            A4: Understand their own abilities and strengths as writers</p>	<p>Whole class teaching, formal input, workshops and seminars</p> <p>Assignment, exam, coursework, written script, self-reflective journal</p>

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p><b>A successful learner from this programme will be able to:</b>            B1: Demonstrate key skills learned from the study of good texts and performances to the development of their own writing            B2: Appraise your own and peer group writing            B3: Identify different readerships and</p>	<p>Whole class teaching, formal input, workshops and seminars, theatre visits and film viewings</p>

<b>3B. Cognitive skills</b>	
audiences B4: Draw on life experience to inform your writing	

<b>3C. Practical and professional skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<b>A successful learner from this programme will be able to:</b> C1: Accurately generate text in appropriate forms C2: Develop a script or other textual source into public performance C3: Create original work using the skills and crafts of performance C4: Engage with issues of equality and diversity C5: Negotiate the commissioning and production process, C6: Understand how to meet objectives and requirements in the submission of funding proposals C7: Be capable of promoting their own work and the work of others through marketing and PR	Whole class teaching, formal input, workshops and seminars

<b>3D. Key/transferable skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<b>A successful learner from this programme will be able to:</b> D1: Source relevant research materials D2: Demonstrate oral and written communication skills and the ability to construct an argument and justify decisions D3: Understand the need to work either independently or cooperatively in groups D4: Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of budgets, time- keeping and timescales and be able to produce work plans and strategies D5: Demonstrate effective IT skills	Whole class teaching, formal input, workshops and seminars

#### 4. Programme Structure

Programme Structure - LEVEL 4	
Compulsory modules	Credit points
Introduction to Writing for Performance	20
Screen Writing I: Short Film	20
The Quest For Originality.	20
Theatre I: An Introduction To Theatre Practice	20
The Writer's Voice	20
An Introduction To Professional Practice	20

**120 Credits at Level 4**

Upon successful completion of Level 4 of the programme, the student will receive a:  
**Certificate of Higher Education Writing for Performance** (120 credits at Level 4)

#### 5. Distinctive features of the programme structure

Where applicable, this section provides details on distinctive features such as:

- Where in the structure above a professional/placement year fits in and how it may affect progression.
- Any restrictions regarding the availability of elective modules
- Where in the programme structure students must make a choice of pathway/route

5.1 Ruskin has a student cohort dominated by mature students, many without experience of previous academic study. This is the determining factor in the design of the programme and has led a particular approach to the sequential progression of the curriculum design.

5.2 Term 1 serves as an introduction to writing for performance but also to the rigours and requirements of degree level study. Students are introduced to writing for performance in the first term by working in groups on familiar generic screen forms in the *Screenwriting I: Short Film* module, and in Term 2 in *The Introduction To Theatre Practice* module. Once eased into the concept of writing they are encouraged to discover their own voice in term 3 in *The Writer's Voice* module, before integrating these two sides of creative writing praxis in Level 5.

5.3 The Term 3 *Introduction To Professional Practice* module introduces students to the concept of the 'portfolio career' that freelance writers must adopt to survive in the contemporary market place. A small minority of students will graduate at the end of Level 4 and exit with the CertHE Writing for performance. Thus, the CertHE has a self-contained curriculum design that is not normally required in a Level 4 curriculum on a creative writing course aimed primarily at school leavers.

5.4 However, it is anticipated that the vast majority of students will progress to Level 5 and this second year of the programme becomes increasingly practice-based with students working on their own projects using a proto-professional writing process and with further professional contextualising within the double *Placement* module in Term 2.

#### 6. Support for students and their learning

6.1 Teaching on the programme is delivered in classes of normally no more than 20 students supported by tutorials with normally 3 or 4 students in a group. Additionally, every student at Ruskin is allocated a personal tutor from the course team monitoring the progress of students, providing advice and guidance and suggesting other forms of support as appropriate.

6.2 Learning support and study skills, encompassing study support for disabled students is an area of undoubted strength at Ruskin, with the Ruskin tutorial system and specialist Learning Development services adding up to comprehensive and highly individualised

support for students. Every HE student at Ruskin undergoes an initial assessment of their basic skills and learning needs. This is particularly important in view of the lack of formal educational qualifications and prevalence of past underachievement. Where a student is diagnosed as dyslexic, or as having another disability need, tutors are informed of the ways they can help support the student better (with their student's consent). This dedicated and whole-College approach to support explains the success of some disabled students at Ruskin who had previously not achieved elsewhere.

**6.3** The College Counsellor has an office close to the Callaghan Library. The confidential support offered encompasses short-term, focused individual work, as well as longer-term personal support. During their time at Ruskin, many students access the service to assist them to cope with the challenges of studying or of living in College, or with problems impinging from their outside or earlier lives. The College Counsellor meets students in their first term. The counselling service that the College provides has been taken up by older learners in the past and has provided an invaluable service in providing them with strategies for managing stress and coping with living communally.

**6.4** The Academic Registrar at Ruskin is undertaking formal IAG training with College support. She offers advice to applicants and current students about financing their studies, meeting their accommodation and childcare needs, and coping with personal and social issues. Older learners may face additional funding difficulties when considering higher education beyond the CertHE level and the Academic Registrar is a valuable resource for advice and guidance, alongside *Head Start*, the adult careers advice service.

## **7. Criteria for admission**

**7.1** All candidates must be able to satisfy the general admissions requirements for Ruskin College. These are:

- Candidates must attend an interview with two academic or academic-related staff members
- Candidates must demonstrate commitment to the ethos and vocation of Ruskin College
- Candidates must have the ability to benefit from study at this level, fulfil the learning outcomes of the programme and achieve the standard required for the award. The ability to benefit focuses on the students being at the right stage in their lives to study successfully and ensuring that students are applying to the right programme (students who are on programmes which are not their interest area are far more likely to fail to achieve than motivated, prepared students). Ruskin is committed to the fact that achieving qualifications at this level can, and does, improve individual student's lives and the wellbeing of communities which it serves.

The admissions process is as follows:

- Students enquire about the programme or the College and receive information and are invited to our Open Days and/or Subject Taster Days
- Students apply and are called for interview with two academic or academic-related staff members (depending on availability)
- Students are either offered a place or are given detailed guidance on how to develop and encouraged to reapply at a future point.
- Students accept the offered place and are called for a literacy assessment. Students with declared disabilities are also given information and advice on applying for provision to support their needs.
- Students attend induction week which introduces Ruskin systems and people and in which students have their first tutorial.

**8. Language of study**

English

**9. Information about assessment regulations**

Please refer to the attached Regulatory Framework (Sept 2012)

**10. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning.**

10.1 The College has quality assurance procedures in place in order to monitor the programmes it offers and to ensure opportunities for quality enhancement. Student evaluation of the programme takes place following each module. The outcomes of these evaluations are collated and tutors respond as appropriate

10.2 Evaluation is reported to and monitored by the Programme Board. In addition to this feedback on the teaching and learning, there is an Annual Student Survey which covers all aspects of the student experience. The outcomes of this are reported to the Programme Board and to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) which monitors the implementation of action arising from the survey.

10.3 The College has an External Examiner in place who will be responsible for monitoring the programme in order to enhance the analysis of the coherence and progression.

10.4 An Annual Report to the Open University is also prepared which gathers together the evaluation, external examiners reports, course review and action arising from them.

10.5 Student representatives attend the Programme Board and report directly on the current teaching and learning. Tutors meet informally throughout the term and discuss teaching and learning and review progress. They meet annually to consider all the evaluations and data on students and review, revise and enhance the course in response to the monitoring process.

10.6 For Quality Assurance purposes information is collected throughout the year on the students' views about how well the College is doing in relation to the educational opportunities it offers. The College ensures all quality standards are met, including residential living and support for external students.

## Annexe 1 - Curriculum map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering (shaded) and assessing (✓) particular programme learning

	Study module/unit	Programme outcomes																				
		A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	
Level 4	Introduction to Writing for Performance	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓							✓	✓	✓		
	The Writer's Voice	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓			
	The Quest For Originality	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓				
	Theatre I: Introduction To Theatre Practice	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓						✓	✓				
	Introduction To Professional Practice		✓					✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Screenwriting I: Short Film	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓			