

PhD with integrated study in Shakespeare and Creativity

This programme, delivered by the [Shakespeare Institute \(/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/index.aspx\)](/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/index.aspx), combines taught modules with a full-length doctoral thesis. With a unique focus on Shakespeare and Creativity, it allows you to combine theatrical and academic study of Shakespeare's life and work through a series of taught modules – assessed by both written work and performance pieces – with the full research training and experience of the traditional PhD.

It makes the most of the unrivalled resources of Shakespeare's Stratford and involves expert tuition from the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and the new Library of Birmingham. The programme is particularly enhanced by the Institute's new collaboration with the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), offering unique and extensive opportunities to work on its premises with RSC artists.

[Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham was awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14 \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx)

Course fact file

Type of Course: Combined research and taught, doctoral research

Study Options: Full time

Duration: 4 years

Start date: September

Contact

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[Shakespeare Institute \(/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/index.aspx\)](/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/index.aspx)

[Department of English Literature \(/schools/edacs/departments/english/index.aspx\)](/schools/edacs/departments/english/index.aspx)

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Details

This programme brings together academic, theatrical and civic interests in Shakespeare and creativity, generating a comprehensive and forward-looking conversation about what Shakespeare is and can be in today's world. You will produce traditional academic written work as well as creative work, all of which will explore Shakespeare's potential in the modern world. You will make new creative work with and at the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) and benefit from unique and exciting access to the RSC's studio theatre, The Other Place.

You will complete 120 credits of taught modules, including four core modules as follows: [full module descriptions below]

- Shakespeareance
- Shakespeare and Theatre Practice (*formerly Shakespeare and Creative Practice*)
- The Shakespeare Ensemble
- Shakespeare and Society

Your remaining 40 credits – equivalent to two taught modules – can be chosen from a range of Shakespeare Institute modules.

Shakespeareance and optional modules are each assessed by one 4,000-word essay; Shakespeare and Theatre Practice is assessed by either two performance assignments and a 2,000-word research paper, or a 4,000-word research paper; Shakespeare Ensemble and Shakespeare and Society both combine shorter written assignments with creative work.

Following completion of your taught modules, you will also produce a supervised 80,000-word PhD thesis. For your dissertation, you will have the chance to work intensively on an RSC project at The Other Place theatre.

You will also attend [weekly Thursday Seminars \(/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/events/seminars.aspx\)](/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/events/seminars.aspx) at the Shakespeare Institute (term-time only), which feature papers presented by a range of established visiting scholars as well as Institute and University of Birmingham staff.

At Birmingham you also have the option of [studying languages \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/calgs/personal-development/languages.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/calgs/personal-development/languages.aspx), free of charge. Almost no other UK University offers you the opportunity to learn the intense graduate academic language skills which you may need to pursue your research.

Visiting the Shakespeare Institute

We welcome prospective students to visit the Shakespeare Institute. We usually arrange open afternoons to coincide with two of our weekly Thursday seminar series a term which gives you a good opportunity to experience the Shakespeare Institute and to meet our staff and students. The [next open afternoon \(/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/events/2015/open-afternoon-mar.aspx\)](/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/events/2015/open-afternoon-mar.aspx) will take place on Thursday 12 March 2015. If you would like to visit us at another time, please contact us.

- [View our interactive virtual tour of the Shakespeare Institute \(/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/virtual-tour.aspx\)](/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/virtual-tour.aspx)
- [Watch our videos about the Shakespeare Institute, our specialist library and student life in Stratford-upon-Avon \(/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/videos.aspx\)](/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/videos.aspx)

Why study this course

The Shakespeare Institute at The Other Place

You will also benefit from our exciting [five-year collaboration with the RSC \(/news/latest/2015/02/rsc-collaboration-05-02-15.aspx\)](/news/latest/2015/02/rsc-collaboration-05-02-15.aspx) which will see the reinstatement of the iconic studio theatre, The Other Place.

The collaboration will see the University become a Founding Partner of The Other Place, which closed in 2006 but will be redeveloped in Stratford-upon-Avon, home of both the RSC and the University's Shakespeare Institute. Opening in 2016 to coincide with the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, it will be a hub for cutting-edge research and creative practice.

Our students will be able to access creative and teaching spaces at The Other Place, as well as the expertise of RSC artists and practitioners.

'This collaboration presents a special opportunity to bring cutting-edge academic work and teaching into the RSC's laboratory for radical experiment, The Other Place. We at the University of Birmingham's Shakespeare Institute share the RSC's passion for making The Other Place a driver for alternative ways of doing Shakespeare and contemporary art, and we're passionate about sharing that with our students as well.

'Everyone involved with this project is keen for The Other Place to be a unique hub for creative and academic exchange that will make a fresh and lasting contribution to cultural life in the UK and beyond.'

Professor Ewan Fernie, co-convenor, PhD Shakespeare and Creativity

Modules

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You will study the following four core modules:

Shakespeareance

This module considers the ways in which Shakespearean language and drama bears on experience, with a view to making the experience of Shakespeare more available to contemporary Shakespeare scholarship and creative practice. It is, above all, a shared experiment in experientially alert and susceptible close reading. In a series of intensively collaborative workshops, on the special course blog and in seminars, it will dwell and linger in Shakespeare's language and stagecraft in order to explore how its complexity produces experiential meanings, in readers, audience members and in characters. "Shakespeareance" will be about reading as process rather than product, and as such, at least potentially, experientially exciting and adventurous.

Shakespeare and Theatre Practice (formerly Shakespeare and Creative Practice)

This module will provide you with experiential knowledge that will inform the way that you interrogate and interpret performance evidence in a variety of media. Through a series of workshops and performance assignments, you will explore three different systematic approaches to performing the language of Shakespeare: the first approach is rooted in the verse and text work of John Barton, Peter Hall, Cicely Berry and Patsy Rodenberg; the second approach explores the legacy of Stanislavski in the Shakespearean work of 20th/21st century practitioners including Katie Mitchell and Mike Alfreds; the third approach brings the devising techniques of prominent physical theatre practitioners to a creative examination of Shakespeare's text.

The Shakespeare Ensemble

In this module you will work as part of an ensemble of creative artists – actors, directors, writers, designers – exploring and testing the theory and practice of performing Shakespeare today. You will participate in workshops with key RSC practitioners, and produce an assessed performance of a re-imagined Shakespearean text, in The Other Place theatre. The module seeks to equip students with a range of skills pertaining to creating a new piece of work - creative dramatic writing, devising as an ensemble and music in the ensemble as well as including sessions with the RSC on new writing, the ensemble, design and lighting.

Shakespeare and Society

Featuring tuition from the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, the Royal Shakespeare Company and the new Birmingham Library (which has an important civic Shakespeare collection and premises), this module explores and tests the scope for bringing Shakespeare into the world beyond the academy and the theatre. You will undertake focused study of Shakespearean civic creativity from Garrick's 1769 Jubilee onwards before producing your own piece of civic creativity inspired by Shakespeare at the RSC.

- View [Shakespeare Unbard \(/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/news/2014/unbard.aspx\)](/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/news/2014/unbard.aspx) – a film of work developed for performance at the Royal Shakespeare Company produced by Shakespeare and Creativity students in 2013 as part of this module.

You will also choose two optional modules from the following:

History of Shakespeare in Performance

This module will consider trends of acting and directing Shakespeare from the Restoration to the present day, and will exploit the Stratford archives to undertake studies of individual actors and directors from the eighteenth century onwards. Subjects of study might include Colley Cibber, David Garrick, Henry Irving and Ellen Terry, Laurence Olivier, Peter Brook, John Barton and Sam Mendes. There will be opportunities to analyse and interpret primary evidence and to consider the cultural context(s) of performance. Plays studied include some or all of *Richard III*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Shakespeare's Legacy

This module considers the adaptation and appropriation of Shakespeare's plays, persona, and possessions from the seventeenth century to the present day. It pays special attention to how changes in theatre practice, aesthetic tastes, politics, and commercial markets have shaped the history of Shakespeare's 'afterlife'. Plays studied include some or all of *King Lear*, *The Tempest*, *Macbeth*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Measure for Measure*.

Shakespeare's Craftsmanship

This module is intended to convey, from a variety of standpoints, a sense of how Shakespeare worked. We will explore a selection of plays from across his career in order to highlight the fluidity of his creativity in terms of such elements as language, structure, mood, adaptation of source material, and how they are made to function in innovative ways alongside the more pragmatic considerations of live performance in the early modern theatre. Alongside these historical, textual, and dramaturgical issues we will also consider how such questions of craft may influence performance practice today.

Shakespeare's Text

The module will develop a critical awareness of the textual foundations of Shakespeare's plays. Topics covered include: the relationship between a modern edition of a play and the earliest printed texts, the nature of the printing process that first made the plays available to readers of books, the characteristics of Shakespeare's dramatic composition, the treatment of the text in the theatre (including censorship, revision and adaptation), and Shakespeare as a collaborator. Plays studied include some or all of *Hamlet*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Sir Thomas More*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard II*, *King Lear*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *Timon of Athens*.

Fees and funding

We charge an annual tuition fee. Fees for 2015/16 are as follows:

- Home / EU: £4,552 full-time
- Overseas: £13,695 full-time

Tuition fees can either be paid in full or by instalments. Learn more about [postgraduate tuition fees and funding \(/postgraduate/dr-fees/index.aspx\)](#).

Eligibility for Home/EU or Overseas fees can be verified with Admissions. Learn more about [fees for international students \(/International/students/finance/fees.aspx\)](#).

Scholarships and studentships

Scholarships to cover fees and/or maintenance costs may be available. To be eligible for these awards, candidates must hold either an offer of a place to study or have submitted an application to study at the University. To discover whether you are eligible for any award across the University, and to start your funding application, please visit the University's [Postgraduate Funding Database \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/funding/FundingFilter.aspx\)](#).

International students can often gain funding through overseas research scholarships, Commonwealth scholarships or their home government.

Entry requirements

We ask that you supply evidence of either:

- A bachelors degree (2:1) in a relevant field

OR

- Relevant professional experience. This should be demonstrated in a portfolio which catalogues and contextualises your work in a relevant field (e.g. catalogue of a recent art installation, actor's CV, transcript giving indication of professional training, web-based archive of recent work, folio of published poems, etc)

In addition to the usual supporting documents, all applications must also be supported by:

- Two letters of recommendation
- A cover letter which indicates your creative potential, either proposing specific creative projects you intend to pursue on the MA or reflecting on your existing creative work. In particular, the cover letter should address the following research questions:
 - What were/are the objectives of the piece, and why? What obstacles did you/might you encounter? How might these have been/be avoided?
 - To what tradition does this piece belong? To what critical conversations or bodies of practice does it contribute? What does it contribute to them?
 - What are its implications for future work? What does/might your work initiate in the field of Shakespeare studies more generally?

Learn more about [entry requirements \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/index.aspx\)](#)

International students

Academic requirements

We accept a range of qualifications; our [country pages \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/country/index.aspx\)](#) show you what qualifications we accept from your country.

English language requirements

You can satisfy our English language requirements in two ways:

- by holding an [English language qualification \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/international/index.aspx\)](#) to the right level
- by taking and successfully completing one of our [English courses for international students \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-pg/international/english-courses.aspx\)](#)

How to apply

Before you make your application

You may wish to [register your interest with us \(https://bham.hobsons.co.uk/emtinterestpage.aspx?ip=postgraduate\)](#) to receive regular news and updates on postgraduate life within this Department and the wider University.

When clicking on the Apply Now button you will be directed to an application specifically designed for the programme you wish to apply for where you will create an account with the University application system and submit your application and supporting documents online. Further information regarding how to apply online can be found on the [How to apply pages \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx)

[Apply now \(https://pqa.bham.ac.uk/lpages/CAL149.htm\)](https://pqa.bham.ac.uk/lpages/CAL149.htm)

Related news and events

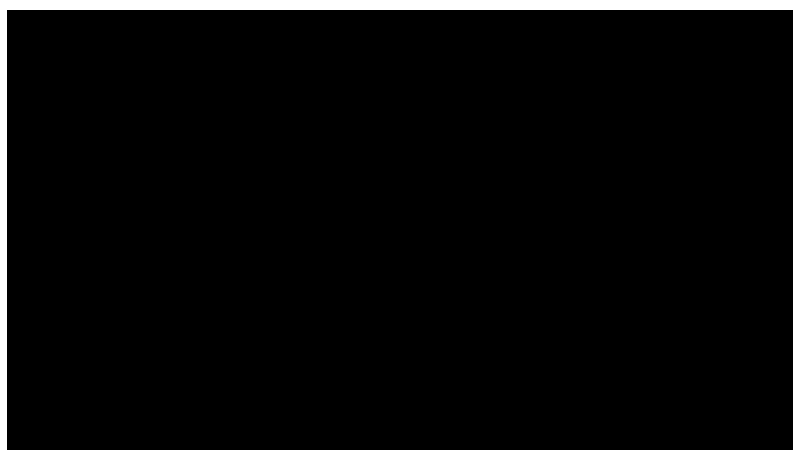
[Shakespeare Unbard: a performance \(https://schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/news/2014/unbard.aspx\)](https://schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/news/2014/unbard.aspx)

Learning and teaching



This programme will make use of the unrivalled resources of Shakespeare's Stratford, involving expert tuition from the [Shakespeare Birthplace Trust \(http://www.shakespeare.org.uk\)](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk) and [Library of Birmingham \(http://www.libraryofbirmingham.com/\)](http://www.libraryofbirmingham.com/). It also particularly benefits from the Institute's new collaboration with [the RSC \(http://www.rsc.org.uk\)](http://www.rsc.org.uk), offering unique and extensive opportunities to work with the company and at The Other Place. Students will also have access to the Shakespeare Institute Library, the Library of the Shakespeare Centre that curates the archives of the RSC, and the Shakespeare Collection held at the Library of Birmingham.

Interviews with the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, the Library of Birmingham and the Royal Shakespeare Company



Research interests of staff

Shakespeare in performance; Shakespeare in culture since 1623; Shakespeare and opera; the writings, representation and reputation of Elizabeth I; notions of authorship and nation; the representation of Shakespeare

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Director of The Shakespeare Institute and Professor of Shakespeare Studies

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Email: [m.dobson@bham.ac.uk \(mailto:m.dobson@bham.ac.uk\)](mailto:m.dobson@bham.ac.uk)

Bibliography, editing, textual criticism, textual theory, Renaissance theatre culture and print culture, and Shakespeare's contemporary dramatists

Contact: Professor John Jowett

Deputy Director and Professor of Shakespeare Studies

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Email: [j.d.jowett@bham.ac.uk \(mailto:j.d.jowett@bham.ac.uk\)](mailto:j.d.jowett@bham.ac.uk)

Literature and experience, religion, philosophy, and creativity; aesthetics; Shakespeare and poetry; Shakespeare in conjunction with great art and thought from other times and places

Contact: Professor Ewan Fernie

Professor of Shakespeare Studies

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The full corpus of dramatic works written in the British Isles, and by 'British' authors overseas, between the English Reformation and the English Revolution, including both commercial and literary plays, masques and entertainments, and drama in Latin, Greek, Cornish, and Welsh

Contact: Dr Martin Wiggins

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Email: [m.j.wiggins@bham.ac.uk \(mailto:m.j.wiggins@bham.ac.uk\)](mailto:m.j.wiggins@bham.ac.uk)

Medical and religious beliefs in early modern England, in particular their intersection. The body and metaphor, illness narratives, early modern life writings, the history of human experience. Shakespeare's cultural legacy.

Contact: Dr Erin Sullivan

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Email: [e.sullivan@bham.ac.uk \(mailto:e.sullivan@bham.ac.uk\)](mailto:e.sullivan@bham.ac.uk)

Cultural history, visual arts and material culture of early modern Britain; Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture.

Contact: Dr Tara Hamling c/o Department of Modern History

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 9510

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Associated Members of English, Drama and American and Canadian Studies:

Ben Jonson and his contemporaries; The relationships of Renaissance and Romantic writers; The relationships of manuscript and print; Early modern poetry and drama.

Contact: Dr Tom Lockwood c/o Department of English

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 2763

Email: t.e.lockwood@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:t.e.lockwood@bham.ac.uk>)

Women's writing in the 17th century; Manuscript Studies; History of Translation.

Contact: Dr Gillian Wright c/o Department of English

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Shakespearean performance, Anglo-European theatrical relationships, Victorian and Edwardian theatre and the History of Film.

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Email: r.b.jackson@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:r.b.jackson@bham.ac.uk>)

Employability

The University of Birmingham has been ranked 8th in the UK and 60th in the world for post-qualification employability in the latest global survey of universities commissioned by the International Herald Tribune.

Your degree will provide excellent preparation for employment and this will be further enhanced by the employability skills training offered through the College of Arts and Law Graduate School.

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Postgraduates at the Shakespeare Institute are able to develop a broad range of creative, research and theatre skills, as well as in-depth subject knowledge.

In 2013, 99% of our postgraduates were in work and/or further study six months after graduation.

In recent years, our postgraduates have successfully entered a variety of sectors from teaching in secondary and higher education to performing arts, publishing, museums and library and archive work. Employers that graduates have gone on to work for include: Imperial College London; National Trust; Royal Shakespeare Company; Shakespeare Birthplace Trust; The Grove Theatre; and University of Bristol.

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