

## BA Drama and English Literature



English Literature is about a passion for the written word, from medieval times to the modern age. Drama is about bringing those words on the page to life, through interpretation and performance. Probably the most obvious link between the two subjects is, of course, Shakespeare, and at Birmingham you may choose to take a year-long Shakespeare module supported by the unique resources and expertise of our world-renowned Shakespeare Institute in nearby Stratford-upon-Avon.

Both subjects are taught in the School of English, Drama and American and Canadian Studies, where you will find we offer exciting opportunities, first-class facilities and a commitment to excellence in teaching. We will guide and support you to become a confident and accomplished reader, researcher, writer and performer, with excellent career prospects, whatever field you choose to go into.

**[Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham has been 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

UCAS code: WQ43

Duration: 3 Years

Places Available: 30

Applications in 2013: 167

Typical Offer: AAB (**[More detailed entry requirements and the international qualifications accepted can be found in the course details \(? OpenSection=EntryRequirements\)](#)**)

Start date: September

### Contact

Admissions Tutor

Dr Liz Tomlin

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**[School of English, Drama and American & Canadian Studies \(/schools/edacs/index.aspx\)](/schools/edacs/index.aspx)**

**[Department of Drama and Theatre Arts \(/schools/edacs/departments/drama/index.aspx\)](/schools/edacs/departments/drama/index.aspx)**

**[Birmingham Seminar for Environmental Humanities \(/schools/historycultures/departments/history/research/projects/bisemeh/index.aspx\)](/schools/historycultures/departments/history/research/projects/bisemeh/index.aspx)**

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

### Details

In this programme, you study half of your modules (60 credits) in Drama and half in English Literature (60 credits)

#### First year

**Drama:** This is a foundation year and helps students acquire a common language of analysis and performance. Practical courses are offered in Theatre Practices (physical approaches and Stanislavski-based techniques), Theoretical courses include the Dramatic Medium.

**[Detailed first year BA Drama and Theatre Arts undergraduate modules \(/undergraduate/courses/drama/drama-theatre-modules-firstyear.aspx\)](/undergraduate/courses/drama/drama-theatre-modules-firstyear.aspx)**

**English Literature:** The first-year literature foundation modules introduce students to a range of kinds and periods of literature, using a lively variety of critical and theoretical approaches. Modules include:

- Literary Aesthetics after 1800 (20 credits) introduces some key notions of form, style and genre in literary texts written after 1800. You will study three major focal texts (or groups of shorter texts) of different genres, and will develop skills in the close analysis of passages and in discursive essay writing.
- Literary Aesthetics before 1800(20 credits) introduces key notions of form, style and genre in texts written before 1800. You will study three major focal texts (or groups of shorter texts) of different genres (for example, Malory, *Morte D'Arthur*; revenge tragedies of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries; selected verse satire of the 18<sup>th</sup> century).
- The Critical Practice module 10+10 credits focuses on key knowledge and skills central to critical practice in English Studies. You will be introduced to strategies for engaging with primary and secondary sources for literary study and methodologies in literary criticism. This module is closely related to Literary Aesthetics after 1800 and Literary Aesthetics before 1800.

## Second year

Drama: The second year builds on the foundation work of the first year and also provides opportunities to develop practical specialisms in areas such as:

- Directing
- Playwriting
- Physical Theatre
- Advanced Acting
- Mask and Mime

As well as choosing study options in subjects as diverse as:

- Shakespeare on Film
- Performing Objects – Puppets
- Automata
- Robots
- Melodrama
- Contemporary Performance

Practical modules are taught by core staff and visiting professional practitioners; study modules are taught by academic staff who are researching and publishing in that particular field of inquiry.

### **[Detailed second year BA Drama and Theatre Arts undergraduate modules \(/undergraduate/courses/drama/drama-theatre-modules-secondyear.aspx\)](#)**

English Literature: In this year, you take modules that address topics in three major periods of English literature, and which are informed by theoretical as well as textual and historical approaches. You will study:

- *One* Option module in Medieval/Early Modern literature (20 credits) chosen from a list of options.
- *One* Option module in Modern literature (20 credits) chosen from a list of options. Examples might include *Writing and the World in the Nineteenth Century or Victorian and Decadent Literature: The Modern, the Aesthetic, and the Gothic* or *Making it New: Modernism and Literary Innovation in the Early Twentieth Century or Literature in Britain Since 1945*.
- *One* Transhistorical Literature Option (10 + 10 credits). Examples may include *Satire or Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* or *Hacking the Book*.

## Third year

Drama: A wide variety of practical options are available, such as:

- Directing
- Playwriting
- Creative Industries
- Contemporary Performance

In addition, students can opt to take part in one of a series of public performances as one of their major practical options. These productions are directed by experienced members of staff or visiting professional directors and are supported by our full-time production staff and theatre crafts students. They can range from contemporary or historical texts, to devised, site-specific pieces, to theatre in education productions. Study options are diverse and include:

- Popular Theatre
- Contemporary Theatre
- Shakespeare on Film
- Performing Objects: (Automata)

### **[Detailed third year BA Drama and Theatre Arts undergraduate modules \(/undergraduate/courses/drama/drama-theatre-modules-thirdyear.aspx\)](#)**

English Literature: The final year is the culmination of your programme, in which you choose two from a number of special option modules, taught by experts in those specialisms, and also undertake a dissertation in which you demonstrate sophisticated understanding of the issues in literature that you have been studying over the last two years. You study:

- Literature Dissertation (10 + 10 credits). You will write a 5,000 word dissertation on a subject of your choice.
- *One choice from* Literature Options (all 20 credits; see below)
- *Either* Shakespeare: Works, Time and Impact (10+10 credits) This course, running through the whole of your final year, allows you the opportunity to think widely across all Shakespeare's texts in their historical, cultural and theatrical contexts; it is taught, in the main, by staff from the University's Shakespeare Institute, and students are encouraged to draw on the resources of the Shakespeare Institute Library.
- *Or a further* Literature Option (20 credits)

Literature Options available to final-year students have recently included: Ben Jonson; Chaucer: Pre-modern Writing and Post-modern Reading; Contemporary Irish Writing; Decadence and Aestheticism; English Reformed; ExtraOrdinary Bodies: Difference and Normalcy in Contemporary Literatures; Fantasy and Fandom; Gossip, Scandal, and Celebrity; Hardy and Wilde; Henry James; Literary Modernism; Literature and Politics in the 1930s; Literature, Sexuality, and the Body; Lyrical Ballads; Medieval Manuscripts; The Novels of Virginia Woolf; Paradise Lost: Text and Context; Viragos, Coquettes and Prudes; Voicing Women; Victoria's Secrets: Literature and Secrecy in the Nineteenth Century; The Works of T. S. Eliot; Utopia and its Discontents.

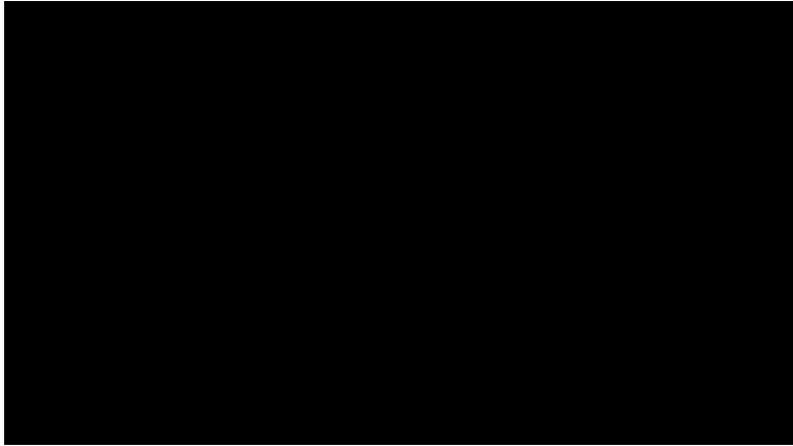
Not all third-year options run at all times: this information is offered for general guidance only. It may be necessary from time to time to vary timing, content and availability.

## Why study this course

Our Drama and Theatre Arts programme aims to provide you with a grounding in the arts involved in performance and theatre. We offer a combination of core courses in practical and theoretical aspects of the subject. In a Joint Honours degree you can study drama together with another subject, which has equal weighting in terms of commitment and assessment to your work in Drama and Theatre Arts.

- The Department of Drama and Theatre Arts at the University of Birmingham has a national and international reputation for excellence in teaching and research in the study of Drama. The department was ranked 7th in the Guardian League table in 2012.
- Birmingham is an ideal location to study Drama with more theatres in the city than anywhere else in the UK outside of London. Staff and students have close links with these theatres and there is the option to take part in work experience with the Birmingham Rep and Hippodrome theatres.
- Our Drama and Theatre Arts course aims to provide you with a grounding in the arts involved in performance and theatre. We offer a combination of core courses in practical and theoretical aspects of the subject. There are work familiarisation opportunities with the BBC Drama Village which is on the Selly Oak campus.
- Third-year students can opt to take part in one of a series of public performances as one of their major practical options.
- The Guild has 9 different drama and theatre student societies including Article 19 theatre (who run two or three productions a term), Comedy Footnotes (for those interested in stand up comedy), Guild Musical Theatre Group, Infinity Stage Company (who are charity based and get involved in volunteer work), Three Bugs Fringe Group (host socials and take a play to the Edinburgh Festival) and Watch This (who produce original and experimental plays).

### **Drama open day talk**

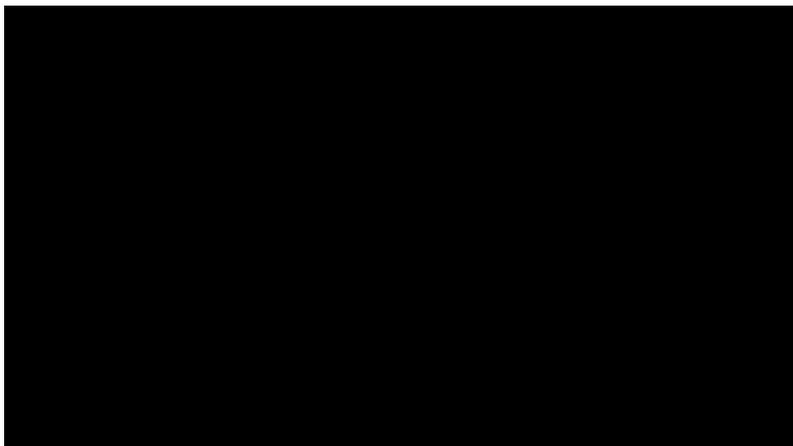


Dr Adam Ledger delivers the Drama and Theatre Arts June 2013 undergraduate open day talk.

In English you have an unparalleled opportunity, not only to engage with the materials of a broad and diverse cultural, textual and linguistic discipline, but also to develop skills in intellectual analysis, critical thinking and articulate expression. We believe that we are partners in learning with our students, and our programme is designed to ensure that you are a fully supported and an active learner.

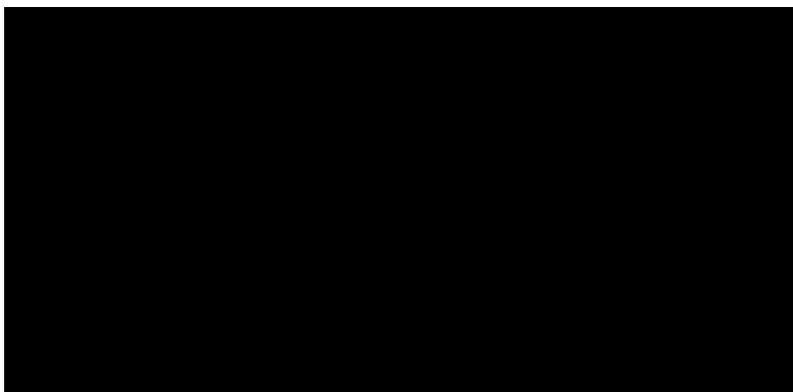
- All English Literature students take a year-long Shakespeare course, drawing on the unique resources of our internationally-renowned Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-upon-Avon.
- BEDSOC (Birmingham English Department Society) is very active in organising social events, for example trips to the theatre and theme nights out such as Hawaii night.
- ? Students at Birmingham will also benefit from frequent lectures and readings from award-winning writers and industry professionals. Speakers in recent years have included novelist David Lodge, poet and writer Jackie Kay, poet Simon Armitage, playwright Simon Stephens and theatre director Greg Doran.
- English literature graduates from the University of Birmingham have a higher than average rate for employability for the subject and are ranked in the top 10 universities nationally for graduate employability.

### **English Literature open day talk**



Dr Daniel Moore delivers the 2014 undergraduate open day talk on studying English Literature at the University of Birmingham.

### **Joint honours open day talk**



Dr Craig Blunt delivers an undergraduate open day talk about studying Joint Honours at the university.

## Fees and funding

**Standard fees** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/courses/fees/standard>) apply  
Learn more about **fees and funding** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/undergraduate/loans.aspx>)

### Scholarships

Learn more about our **scholarships and awards** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/undergraduate/funding/index.aspx>)

## Entry requirements

**Number of A levels required:** 3

**Typical offer:** AAB

**Required subjects and grades:** A level English Literature grade A. A level Drama or Theatre Studies is desirable but not essential. If taken, it will be requested at grade B.

**Additional information:** Other qualifications are considered - learn more about **entry requirements** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/requirements>)

### International students:

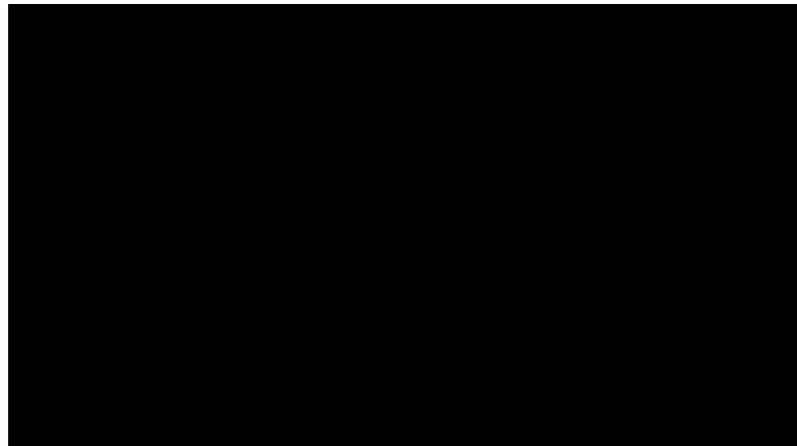
We welcome applications from international students and invite you to join our vibrant community of over 4500 international students who represent 150 different countries. We accept a range of qualifications, our **country pages** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/country/index.aspx>) show you what qualifications we accept from your country.

Depending on your chosen course of study, you may also be interested in the Birmingham Foundation Academy, a specially structured programme for international students whose qualifications are not accepted for direct entry to UK universities. Further details can be found on the **foundation academy web pages** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/foundation-academy/Pathways/index.aspx>).

## How to apply

Apply through UCAS at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) (<http://www.ucas.com/>)

Learn more about **applying** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/courses/apply>)



## Key Information Set (KIS)

Key Information Sets (KIS) are comparable sets of information about full- or part-time undergraduate courses and are designed to meet the information needs of prospective students.

All KIS information has been published on the Unistats website and can also be accessed via the small advert, or 'widget', below. On the **Unistats website** (<http://unistats.direct.gov.uk>) you are able to compare all the KIS data for each course with data for other courses.

The development of Key Information Sets (KIS) formed part of HEFCE's work to enhance the information that is available about higher education. They give you access to reliable and comparable information in order to help you make informed decisions about what and where to study.

The KIS contains information which prospective students have identified as useful, such as student satisfaction, graduate outcomes, learning and teaching activities, assessment methods, tuition fees and student finance, accommodation and professional accreditation.

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## Learning and teaching

**Practical classes and workshops** form a large part of the programme and are essential for helping you to gain skills in performance and devising techniques. They involve input from tutors and project-based small-group work, culminating in performances or fulfilling production tasks.

**Theatre crafts classes** also give you valuable technical skills in theatre production.

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## Assessment methods

Studying at degree-level is likely to be very different from your previous experience of learning and teaching. You will be expected to think, discuss and engage critically with the subject and find things out for yourself. We will enable you to make this transition to a new style of learning, and the way that you are assessed during your studies will help you develop the essential skills you need to make a success of your time at Birmingham.

You will be assessed in a variety of ways, and these may be different with each module that you take. You will be assessed through coursework which may take the form of essays, group and individual presentations and formal exams (depending on your chosen degree).

During your first year you will undergo a formal 'transition' review to see how you are getting on and if there are particular areas where you need support. This is in addition to the personal tutor who is based in your school or department and can help with any academic issues you encounter.

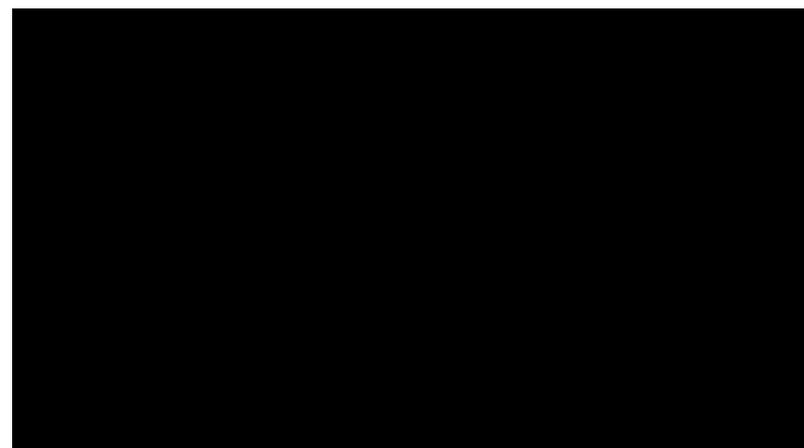
At the beginning of each module, you will be given information on how and when you will be assessed for that particular programme of study. You will receive feedback on each assessment within four weeks, so that you can learn from and build on what you have done. You will be given feedback on any exams that you take; if you should fail an exam we will ensure that particularly detailed feedback is made available to enable you to learn for the future.

The principal means of assessment for English are coursework essays and written exams.

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## Employability

### Drama



[Video above - Dr Adam Ledger discusses careers and employability during the Drama and Theatre Arts open day presentation]

As a student of Drama and Theatre Arts you will develop your confidence and fantastic skills for your future career, such as presentation, communication and teamwork skills. Many students who study this course are interested in careers in the arts sector and here at the University of Birmingham we have great links with local arts organisations, as well as producing a broad programme of our own performances each year.

Drama and Theatre Arts graduates from Birmingham have a higher than average rate for employability for the subject, and we're ranked in the top ten universities nationally for graduate employability. 90% of our Drama graduates go into work or study within six months of graduation, with 75% in a professional or managerial job. Our graduates start careers with employers including the BBC, the RSC, The National Theatre, The Birmingham Hippodrome and The Royal Court Theatre, in roles such as theatre choreographer, drama teacher, performing arts tutor and TV production assistant director. But working directly in the arts isn't your only option; recent graduates have also gone into marketing, events organisation, teaching and writing.

Famous University of Birmingham alumni include:

- **Phyllida Lloyd**, BA English and Drama, 1979: Director of plays, opera and film including *Mamma Mia!* on stage and screen and the recent film *The Iron Lady*.
- **Victoria Wood**, BA Drama and Theatre Arts, 1974: comedienne, actress, singer-songwriter, screenwriter and director.

- **Ben Shephard**, BA Drama and Theatre Arts, 1997: television presenter currently working for Sky Sports and ITV.
- **Stuart Blackburn**, BA Drama and Theatre Arts, 1987: Current Series Producer of *Emmerdale* at ITV.
- **Pippa Evans**, BA Drama and Theatre Arts, 2004: comedienne - arrived on the Edinburgh Fringe in 2008 and nominated for Best Newcomer

Whether you have a clear idea of where your future aspirations lie or want to consider the broad range of opportunities available once you have a Birmingham degree, **our Careers Network** (<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/employability/careers/index.aspx>) can help you achieve your goal. This is a unique careers guidance service tailored to your academic subject area, offering a specialised team (in each of the five academic colleges) who can give you expert advice. This includes individual careers advice and events to give you insight into the professions and employers of interest to arts graduates. The Department also has a long-established relationship with the BBC which has led to work experience placements being offered to our students, and we're developing links with local arts organisations to provide more amazing opportunities.

We encourage all our students to apply their skills in the workplace by undertaking internships in the summer; the work experience bursary scheme enables students to apply for funding for those career areas where placements are often unpaid. You can also apply for our 'Global Challenge' scheme to work overseas on an expenses paid placement during your summer vacation at organisations such as the Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

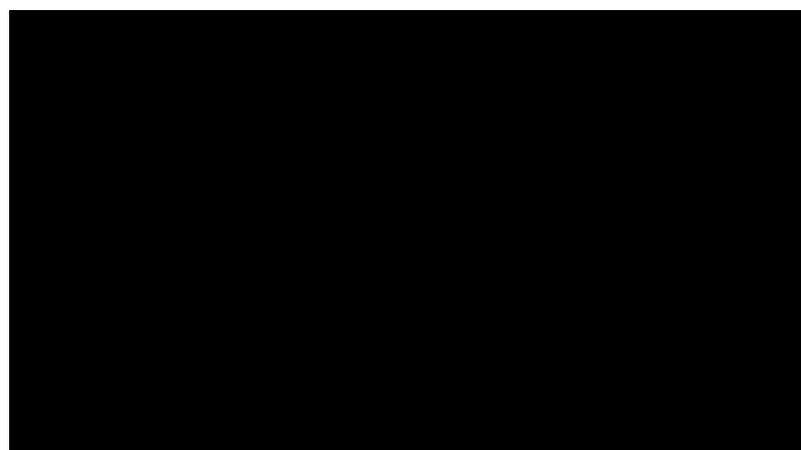
## Internships

“ This experience will particularly benefit me in applying for Festival intern jobs, as I would like to eventually work in Birmingham's festival scene ”

Danielle Blackburn  
BA Drama and Theatre, 2nd year

(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/drama/internships.aspx>)

## English Literature



[Video above - Dr Kate Rumbold discusses careers and employability during the English Literature open day presentation]

Studying for an English BA at Birmingham is an unparalleled opportunity, not only to engage with a diverse cultural, textual and linguistic discipline, but also to develop skills in intellectual analysis, critical thinking and articulate expression – skills that last a lifetime and qualify you for many possible careers. You will also be encouraged to acquire practical skills that you will find just as useful in your future career, including oral presentation, professional documentation, group work and the uses of information technology.

50% of vacancies advertised for new and recent graduates don't specify a degree subject, and English graduates enter a wide range of careers including advertising, journalism and media, government, law, publishing and teaching at every level. About 25% of English graduates pursue postgraduate study to specialise in an academic area or prepare for careers such as law and teaching.

English graduates from Birmingham have a high rate for employability for the subject, and we are ranked in the top ten universities nationally for graduate employability. 93% of our English graduates go into work or study within six months of graduation. Our graduates have started careers with employers including the BBC, Headline Publishing Group, Mirror Group Newspapers and Oxford University Press, in roles such as account executive, editorial assistant, marketing assistant and sales and events coordinator.

Whether you have a clear idea of where your future aspirations lie or want to consider the broad range of opportunities available once you have a Birmingham degree, **our Careers Network** (<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/employability/careers/index.aspx>) can help you achieve your goal. This is a unique careers guidance service tailored to your academic subject area, offering a specialised team who can give you expert advice. This includes individual careers advice and events to give you insight into the professions and employers of interest to arts graduates. Our 'Creative careers' series is always popular with our students, and features events with employers and professionals from areas such as advertising, PR and communications, careers in journalism, publishing and writing, and careers in the theatre.

## English alumni profiles



“ I loved the fun, inclusive and creative English course at Birmingham. ”

Jo Usmar  
Cosmopolitan / freelance writer

(<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/edacs/departments/english/undergraduate/alumni-profiles.aspx>)

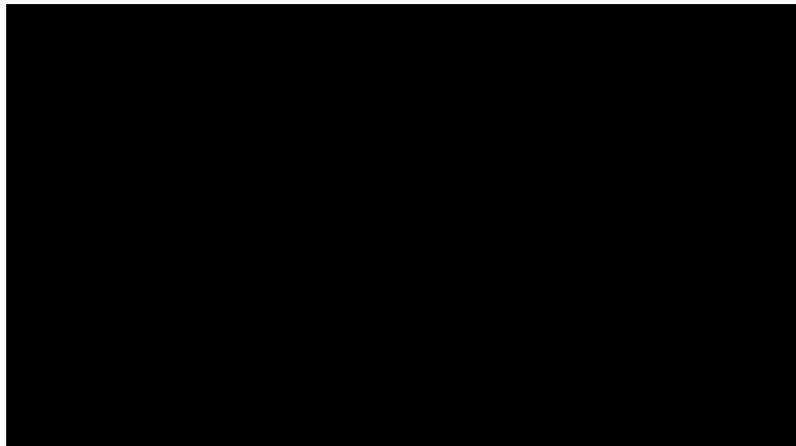
## Careers events

We also hold events covering careers in teaching, event management, marketing and working with charities; we're developing links with local arts organisations to create some amazing opportunities for students; and you can even apply for our 'Global Challenge' to work overseas on an expenses paid placement during your summer vacation. We also encourage all our students to apply their skills in the workplace by undertaking internships in the summer; the work experience bursary scheme enables students to apply for funding for placements in those career fields where they are often unpaid.

## Extra-curricular activities

To enhance your career prospects even further, you will need to think about engaging in some extra-curricular activities while you're at university to broaden your skills and your network of contacts. This can include the many societies at the Guild of Students and also the many voluntary opportunities offered with local arts organisations. Our employer-endorsed award-winning **Personal Skills Award** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/careers/psa.aspx>) (PSA) recognises your extra-curricular activities, and provides an accredited employability programme designed to improve your career prospects.

Our College of Arts and Law **undergraduate research scholarship scheme** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/artslaw/studentexperience/urs/index.aspx>) enables interested students to work on a current academic research project being run by one of the College's academic researchers. Undergraduate research scholars gain work experience over the summer after their first or second year and have the chance to develop skills in both collaborative and independent research.



## Cultural Internships

Our innovative **Cultural Internships** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/culture/volunteering/regionally.aspx>) offer graduates the opportunity for a six month paid internship at a leading cultural institution in the West Midlands. These internships are a unique opportunity to learn fundamental, transferable business and interpersonal skills, through experience of real work in an established cultural institution. Our current partners include Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, Birmingham REP, Birmingham Royal Ballet, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust and the Library of Birmingham. We have plans to expand the scheme to include our own major cultural assets, such as Winterbourne House, the Lapworth Museum, and the Barber Institute of Fine Arts. This scheme will give you professional experience to set you apart in a competitive graduate market.

We also offer voluntary work which complements your studies by helping you gain practical experiences in occupational settings while contributing back to society. This can bring new skills that will be useful throughout your future and can make a positive impact on your learning whilst at university. Volunteering enables you to develop skills such as communication, interpersonal skills, teamwork, self-confidence and self-discipline all of which can be transferred into your studies.

Your Birmingham degree is evidence of your ability to succeed in a demanding academic environment. Employers target Birmingham students for their drive, diversity, communication and problem-solving skills, their team-working abilities and cultural awareness, and our graduate employment statistics have continued to climb at a rate well above national trends. If you make the most of the wide range of services you will be able to develop your career from the moment you arrive.

100% Students agreed staff are good at explaining things



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BA (Hons) Drama and English Literature  
Full time

Official data collected by HEFCE