

Programme Title: MA in Comparative Literature



Programme Specification

Awarding Body/Institution	Queen Mary University of London
Teaching Institution	Queen Mary University of London
Name of Final Award and Programme Title	MA in Comparative Literature
Name of Interim Award(s)	
Duration of Study / Period of Registration	1 year FT, 2 years PT
QM Programme Code / UCAS Code(s)	Q2S1 / Q2S2
QAA Benchmark Group	
FHEQ Level of Award	Level 7
Programme Accredited by	
Date Programme Specification Approved	
Responsible School / Institute	School of Languages, Linguistics & Film

Schools which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme

n/a

Institution(s) other than Queen Mary that will provide some teaching for the programme

n/a

Programme Outline

The field of Comparative Literature – often understood as comparative cultural studies and not solely concerned with literature – has since its inception recognised the realities of cultural movement, of exchange and dialogue, and of the necessity of intervening in topical discourses, whether these be theoretical or not. The transnational reception of literature has always been a central concern. Philosophy grounds much of the field's thought, as does, increasingly, the area of translation studies. Word/image and word/music relations become increasingly important. Comparative Literature belongs to areas which prepare us to deal with a 'globalised' or 'globalising' world – that is, to recognise and to articulate the meaning of boundaries, identity and difference.

This not to say that the field of Comparative Literature is amorphous and ill-defined, as timely interventions by Susan Bassnett, Jonathan Culler, Gayatri Spivak, George Steiner, Emily Apter and others have demonstrated. Rather, it demands rigorous structures which facilitate the relating of the parts of study. The colleagues teaching the modules of this MA, as varied as their own research may be, all share the ethos of defining contexts and comparative relations (e.g. in considering theories of the avant-garde, discourses on genre, ramifications of the Enlightenment, interactions of literature and philosophy, or the role of translation). A number of these colleagues are often also members of international networks.

Aims of the Programme

The programme aims to

- provide students in a systematic way with a critical awareness of the scope and breadth of Comparative Literature and contemporary issues relating to this field;
- introduce them to various theoretical and cultural discourses;
- provide them with competence in employing research methodology;
- refine students' writing and communication skills;
- open vistas of cultural understanding through interrelations of literatures, philosophy and the arts;
- prepare them to pursue a research degree should they so wish.

What Will You Be Expected to Achieve?

Students who successfully complete this programme

- will have acquired or refined the ability to move with facility across national boundaries, theoretical discourses and intermedial comparison;
- will possess familiarity with the historical developments and current issues in Comparative Literature and Comparative Cultural Studies;
- will be well-positioned to deal with and articulate complex cultural issues arising from their studies;
- will possess a heightened sense of self-confidence in pursuing independent enquiry;
- will have written a substantial dissertation with regular and appropriate supervision for choosing a topic and executing the project;
- will be in a position to draft a robust project outline for a PhD should they so wish;
- will possess complementing transferable skills for the critical evaluation of complex challenges, which in turn would promote further professional development.

Academic Content:

A 1

Disciplinary Skills - able to:

B 1

Attributes:

C 1

How Will You Learn?

Teaching will be conducted in seminars with guided reading in an atmosphere of discussion and exchange of ideas. A substantial component of private study and reading will complement the seminars. Where appropriate, instructors may incorporate visits, for example, to museums, galleries or libraries.

How Will You Be Assessed?

Each L7 module will be assessed by an essay of 4000 words. The dissertation will have a length of 10,000-15,000 words.

PGT students taking L6 modules will take the same assessment as the UG students on that module. PGT coursework in these cases will be assessed using the PGT marking scale.

For the dissertation, the articulated topic will be finalised and agreed by the end of semester B with the student's adviser and the supervisor of the project. In regular, pre-arranged meetings the supervisor and often also the adviser will guide the student's research and writing.

How is the Programme Structured?

The MA requires a total of 180 credits distributed as follows:

Full-time:

30 credits Cultures of Comparison (core module)

Students have 60 credits of optional modules to select. These can be selected from:

- Level 7 Comparative Literature Elective Modules
- Up to 30 credits may be selected from Level 7 versions of Level 6 Comparative Literature modules.

Part-time:

Year 1 (60 credits) —

30 credits Cultures of Comparison (core module)

Students have 30 credits of optional modules to select. These can be selected from:

- Level 7 Comparative Literature Elective Modules
- Level 7 versions of Level 6 Comparative Literature modules.

Year 2—

60 credit Dissertation module (core module)

Students have 30 credits of optional modules to select. These can be selected from:

- Level 7 Comparative Literature Elective Modules
- Level 7 versions of Level 6 Comparative Literature modules (only if Level 7 versions of Level 6 modules were not taken in Year 1. Students are only able to take up to 30 credits of Level 7 versions of Level 6 modules in total across both years).

A maximum of 30 credits of optional modules may be taken from Level 7 versions of Level 6. One elective module may be taken from another MA either in SLLF or in the Faculty (HSS), subject to the approval of the programme convenor/adviser. That module should complement the concerns of Comparative Literature and the academic interests of the student.

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Academic Year of Study

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester

What Are the Entry Requirements?

1. First or High II,1 at B.A. in related fields in the humanities or social sciences (such as Comparative Literature, a foreign language, English, Philosophy, Classics, History, Cultural Geography, &c.).
2. Knowledge of one or more languages other than English would be desirable but not be required.

How Do We Listen and Act on Your Feedback?

The Staff-Student Liaison Committee provides a formal means of communication and discussion between schools/institutes and its students. The committee consists of student representatives from each year in the school/institute together with appropriate representation from staff within the school/institute. It is designed to respond to the needs of students, as well as act as a forum for discussing programme and module developments. Staff-Student Liaison Committees meet regularly throughout the year.

Each school/institute operates a Learning and Teaching Committee, or equivalent, which advises the School/Institute Director of Taught Programmes on all matters relating to the delivery of taught programmes at school level including monitoring the application of relevant QM policies and reviewing all proposals for module and programme approval and amendment before submission to Taught Programmes Board. Student views are incorporated in the committee's work in a number of ways, such as through student membership, or consideration of student surveys.

All schools/institutes operate an Annual Programme Review of their taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision. APR is a continuous process of reflection and action planning which is owned by those responsible for programme delivery; the main document of reference for this process is the Taught Programmes Action Plan (TPAP) which is the summary of the school/institute's work throughout the year to monitor academic standards and to improve the student experience. Students' views are considered in this process through analysis of the NSS and module evaluations.

Academic Support

All students beginning study on the programme participate in a series of Welcome Week activities, which involve introductions to the programme and specific inductions in the use of the online learning environment. These events also include opportunities for social interaction, and scheduled small group and individual meetings with personal advisers.

Each student's academic progress and personal welfare is monitored by an adviser, the designated members of staff with whom students can raise issues and problems, and from whom they can seek advice and guidance.

All teaching staff hold regular advice and feedback hours in which students are actively encouraged to discuss their work and their progress.

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There is a dedicated Student Experience Manager in the School of Languages, Linguistics and Film, who works with academic staff to assist students in need of support.

Where appropriate, students will be advised to make use of relevant professional service departments at QMUL, including Disability and Dyslexia, Welfare, and Counselling services.

The School of Languages, Linguistics and Film recognises how closely writing is linked to thinking; and how important writing skills are both in the academic and professional worlds, and collaborates with QMUL's Thinking Writing team which supports students in the development of their writing skills. QMUL also offers a range of services to support you in your learning and help you develop academically and professionally. These include: Academic Study Workshops, Academic English and Study Skills Support and One-to-One Tutorials working with you on your written assignments.

Programme-specific Rules and Facts

None

Specific Support for Disabled Students

Queen Mary has a central Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) that offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues. The DDS supports all Queen Mary students: full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international at all campuses and all sites.

Students can access advice, guidance and support in the following areas:

- Finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia
- Applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Arranging DSA assessments of need
- Special arrangements in examinations
- Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders)
- Specialist one-to-one "study skills" tuition
- Ensuring access to course materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille)
- Providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants)
- Mentoring support for students with mental health issues and conditions on the autistic spectrum.

Links With Employers, Placement Opportunities and Transferable Skills

The expected enhancement of students' career prospects can be as varied as the applicants themselves. Experience suggests that students would move into cultural industries, media, publishing, journalism, writing and/or further research (e.g. PhD with a view to an academic career). Transferable skills would allow students' career paths to lead to areas requiring analytical and writing skills such as law, civil service, teaching, management or research-intensive consultation.

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Programme Specification Approval

Person completing Programme Specification

Adhira Mangalagiri

Person responsible for management of programme

David Adger, Head of School

**Date Programme Specification produced/amended
by School Learning and Teaching Committee**

**Date Programme Specification approved by
Taught Programmes Board**