

# MA Script Writing

## Programme Specification

**Awarding Institution:**

University of London (Interim Exit Awards made by Goldsmiths' College)

**Teaching Institution:** Goldsmiths, University of London

**Final Award:** MA Script Writing

**Programme Name:** MA Script Writing

**Total credit value for programme:** 180 Credits

**Name of Interim Exit Award(s):**

Postgraduate Certificate in Script Writing

Postgraduate Diploma in Script Writing

**Duration of Programme:** 1 year

**UCAS Code(s):** Not applicable

**HECoS Code(s):** (100729) Scriptwriting

**QAA Benchmark Group:** Not applicable

**FHEQ Level of Award:** Level 7

**Programme accredited by:** ScreenSkills

**Date Programme Specification last updated/approved:** July 2023

**Home Department:** Media, Communications and Cultural Studies

**Department(s) which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:**

Not applicable

## Programme overview

This programme focuses on the creative, analytical and professional aspects of script writing, in the context of the contemporary film, television and radio industries. The MA Script Writing is accredited by ScreenSkills (further to the Department's accreditation as a ScreenSkills Media Academy). The programme is aimed at those who already have some writing experience, but who want to develop professional skills and expertise as screen or radio script writers. It's geared towards developing each student's own writing and distinctive voice, to enable the student to pitch for employment and production funding in a highly competitive industry. Each student will complete the programme with a feature film or equivalent television or radio script, and will also gain knowledge of the film, television or radio industries and some of the contacts necessary to market their projects.

The programme is embedded in the Department's ethos of diversity and interdisciplinarity. This is reflected in the combination of practice and theory which allows us to challenge norms and engage with real-world issues.

MCCS is committed to the college's 'Liberate My Degree' strategy and is determined to develop a diverse and inclusive curriculum that incorporates the interests and concerns of a diverse student body. We want to learn from students themselves and, in our module evaluation forms, we invite students to identify examples of diversity and inclusivity in each module and suggest how our teaching and learning materials might be improved. This process is overseen by DLTC, a dedicated Anti-Racist Committee (ARC) and an ongoing process of curriculum review.

## **Programme entry requirements**

Each student will normally hold an appropriate first degree in the Humanities and a proven commitment to creative writing. Those without a degree, or one in an unrelated field, can be offered a place on the basis of the quality of their creative writing.

Each applicant will provide evidence of their script writing abilities in the form of a ten-page short script and ideas for a Feature Script or TV drama together with ideas for short films. If the applicant's first language is not English, they will normally need a minimum score of 7.0 in IELTS (including 7.0 in the written element) or equivalent.

## **Programme learning outcomes**

The programme aims to enable the student to identify and develop their unique creative writing voice; to hone their professional script writing skills (in a range of formats and media) to industry standards; to become familiar with the industrial context and analytical structure which make a script creatively and commercially successful; and to develop sound editorial judgement on others' work. The student will finish the programme with a feature film or equivalent television or radio script written to a professional industry standard. The student will also have a knowledge of the film, television or radio industries and some of the contacts necessary to market their projects. Further to subject specific knowledge, understanding and skills acquired on the programme, the student should also develop a range of transferable skills and qualities necessary for employment in a variety of contexts. The Quality Assurance Agency describes these qualities as: effective communication skills, the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility, decision making in complex and un-predictable situations and the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development. Such skills are inherent in most of what each student will learn on this programme.

Students who exit the programme with the award of PG Certificate in Script Writing should be able to apply the following learning outcomes:

### Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Develop and apply a practical and wide-ranging understanding of how stories are told for different platforms, audiences and marketplaces via case studies each week	MC71106A, MC71107B
A2	Demonstrate through creative practice a detailed understanding of the techniques of script writing, including format, the writing of action lines, and the technique of 'show don't tell'.	MC71106A, MC71107B

### Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Develop and apply a range of conceptual, critical and evaluative skills	MC71106A, MC71107B
B2	Identify story components parts (such as concept, character, genre and target audience) and reimagine them in a new form	MC71106A, MC71107B
B3	Demonstrate understanding of and ability to apply skills in creative and critical thinking to original script work	MC71106A, MC71107B

### Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Analyse and critique stories created by other writers through the study of produced screenplays.	MC71106A, MC71107B
C2	Appreciate, interpret and analyse a range of creative texts and ideas.	MC71106A, MC71107B

## Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Deploy advanced communication and discussion skills in written and oral contexts.	MC71106A, MC71107B

Students who exit the programme with the award of PG Diploma in Script Writing should be able to apply the following learning outcomes:

## Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Act autonomously to develop and structure a short film script.	MC71106A, MC71107B, MC71067A
A2	Research different market places and their audiences both domestically and internationally and apply an understanding of this in your practice.	MC71106A, MC71107B, MC71067A

## Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Demonstrate understanding of and ability to apply skills in creative and critical thinking to original script work	MC71067A, MC71106A, MC71107B

## Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Write dialogue that has subtext, rhythm and decorum (i.e. that is appropriate to character development).	MC71067A, MC71106A, MC71107B

## Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Demonstrate self-awareness by collaborating constructively with other	MC71067A, MC71106A, MC71107B

	writers in the group and offering and receiving detailed feedback.	
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Students who exit the programme with the award of MA Script Writing should be able to apply the following learning outcomes:

### Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Engage with a range of analytical methods to identify and describe the structural and narrative techniques employed in screen scripts	MC71067A, MC71071B, MC71106A, MC71107B
A2	Research, develop and utilise a broad knowledge of specific genres, characteristics and formats of writing for film, television and radio	MC71067A, MC71106A, MC71107B
A3	Research and apply in your own work industrial working practices in script development & production in film, television and radio	MC71067A, MC71106A, MC71107B
A4	Systematically understand key issues determining the cultural and social significance of your own work and that of others	MC71067A, MC71106A, MC71107B

### Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Develop and apply a range of conceptual, critical and evaluative skills to enable you to analyse and deconstruct any script or drama and to make informed and reasoned creative decisions between your own ideas and those of others	MC71067A, MC71071B, MC71106A, MC71107B
B2	Demonstrate self-direction and originality in the management of complex creative activities and processes	MC71067A
B3	Work both independently and as a team member as well as flexibly, responsibly	MC71067A

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
	and to a deadline, in the preparation and realisation of work	
B4	Engage with and apply strategic skills as appropriate to the development or presentation of creative work	MC71067A, MC71106A, MC71107B

## Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of relevant techniques to write and correctly format an original script which shows a sophisticated understanding of storytelling techniques	MC71067A
C2	Apply a range of development skills to produce scripts that seek to be original and maximise the potential of a medium to engage an audience	MC71067A

## Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Demonstrate advanced communication and discussion skills in written and oral contexts	MC71067A, MC71071B, MC71106A, MC71107B
D2	Exhibit the capacity to handle ideas in creative, critical and evaluative ways	MC71067A, MC71071B, MC71106A, MC71107B
D3	Work successfully in groups as well as independently to realise objectives	MC71067A, MC71071B, MC71106A, MC71107B

## Grading Criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	1st: Distinction (Exceptional)	<p>Practice Grading Criteria</p> <p>Awarded when a candidate satisfies the requirements for a distinction but to an outstanding degree.</p> <p>Essay Grading Criteria</p> <p>Awarded when a candidate satisfies the requirements for a Distinction, but to an outstanding degree. Such work may be of publishable quality and will make a significant contribution to debate within the field.</p>
70-79%	1st: Distinction (Excellent)	<p>Practice Grading Criteria</p> <p>Work of an excellent overall quality. It will consist of an original and ambitious project which has achieved its goals with a good to high level of technical competence. It will be informed both by the strength of its original idea(s) and an appropriate and distinctive structure. It will have been well researched/planned and exhibit a highly developed critical awareness of the medium for storytelling that indicates an excellent grasp of the means by which the audience's involvement may be sustained. It will demonstrate the very effective application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes/assessment section of the programme specification.</p> <p>Essay Grading Criteria (Reflection Essay). Awarded when the assessed work demonstrates the application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the Learning Outcomes of the module to a very effective extent. The work will show evidence of extensive relevant reading and an impressive grasp of the current major issues in the field. This knowledge will have been reviewed critically with insight and independence of thought. Arguments and the presentation of evidence will demonstrate sophisticated reasoning, with clear awareness of issues of methodology and evidence, and will be particularly clear, focused and cogent</p>
60-69%	2.1: Merit (Very good)	<p>Practice Grading Criteria</p> <p>Work that overall achieves a high standard. The work will have achieved the majority of its goals and will demonstrate</p>

		<p>a significant degree of originality and ambition with a good level of technical competence. It will be based on an original idea and will be well-structured. It will show significant evidence of research/ planning and demonstrate a critical awareness of the medium for storytelling that indicates a very good grasp of the means by which the audience's involvement may be sustained. It will demonstrate the effective application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes/ assessment section of the programme specification.</p> <p>Essay Grading Criteria</p> <p>Awarded when the assessed work demonstrates the application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the Learning Outcomes of the module to an effective extent. The work will show consistency and fluency in discussing and evaluating evidence and theories drawn from a wide range of sources. The candidate will demonstrate the 8 MA Script Writing - Programme Specification Goldsmiths, University of London 10 Mark Descriptor Specific Marking Criteria ability to relate their reading to the topic, and will clearly have understood and assimilated the relevant literature.</p>
50-59%	2.2: Pass (Good)	<p>Practice Grading Criteria</p> <p>Work of an overall satisfactory standard showing degrees of originality and ambition and the achievement of its primary goal(s). Technically it will be competent in quality with a recognisable and successful overall structure. It will be based on a considerable level of research/planning and exhibit some critical awareness of the medium for storytelling that indicates a good grasp of the means by which the audience's involvement may be sustained. It will demonstrate the good application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes/assessment section of the programme specification.</p> <p>Essay Grading Criteria</p> <p>Awarded when the assessed work demonstrates the application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the Learning Outcomes of the module to a satisfactory extent. There is clear evidence of knowledge and understanding, but there may be limited development of ideas, critical comment or methodology. Within these</p>



		limitations there will be an indication that the candidate has grasped fundamental concepts and procedures from the module.
40-49%	Fail	<p>Practice Grading Criteria</p> <p>Work of an overall unsatisfactory standard, demonstrating little originality or ambition. It is likely that its goals will not have been achieved to a satisfactory extent and its level of technical competence will range from adequate to poor with a weak structure. It will show evidence of a lack of research/planning and indicate little critical understanding of its medium for storytelling with uneven performances and generally ineffective use of audio and visual elements to sustain the involvement of the audience. It will demonstrate the unsatisfactory application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes/assessment section of the programme specification.</p> <p>Essay Grading Criteria MA Script Writing. Awarded when the candidate demonstrates an unsatisfactory application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the Learning Outcomes of the module.</p>
25-39%	Bad fail	<p>Practice Grading Criteria</p> <p>Represents a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes.</p> <p>Essay Grading Criteria Awarded when the assessed work demonstrates a significant overall failure to achieve the Learning Outcomes, and where there is no evidence of recognition of the question nor of how it might be responded to.</p>
10-24%	Bad fail	<p>Practice Grading Criteria</p> <p>Represents a catastrophic overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes.</p> <p>Essay Grading Criteria</p> <p>Awarded when the assessed work demonstrates a significant overall failure to achieve the Learning Outcomes, and where there is no evidence of recognition of the question nor of how it might be responded to.</p>
1-9%	Very bad fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes

0%	Non submission or plagiarised	Non submission or plagiarised assessment.
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## Mode of study

On campus.

A variety of teaching methods will include lectures, seminars, screenings, discussions and individual tutorials to cover all of the above Knowledge and Skill Outcomes. The tutorials providing individual feedback are important for supporting students in the application of their knowledge and understanding to their own work.

In addition, the following teaching strategies are particularly relevant to specific outcomes:

- Workshops with constructive feedback from fellow students in a supportive environment, for achieving cognitive and thinking and subject-specific outcomes.
- Invited industry guests for the acquisition of subject-specific skills.
- Pitching sessions with industry professionals
- Peer to peer feedback.
- Unrehearsed script readings for achieving the majority of cognitive and thinking and subject specific outcomes.
- Attending film festivals, conferences and other industry events for MA outcome A4.
- The use of student's own work as the foundation and motivation for skills development - a problem orientated approach for B1, B4 and C3.

## Programme structure

### PG-Certificate in Script Writing (60 credits)

Students who do not complete the course but complete the following modules to the value of 60 CATS will be awarded a PG Cert Script Writing.

EITHER:

- 1) Short Form Module (MC71106A) - 30 credits
- 2) Adaptation Module (MC71107B) - 30 credits

OR

- 3) One of the above modules, plus any other modules to the value of 30 credits.

The PGCert is awarded without grade. Attendance is mandatory for all sessions of all compulsory and selected option modules.

### **PG-Diploma in Script Writing (120 credits)**

Students who successfully complete the Long Form module (90 credits) and either the Short Form Module (MC71106A) or the Adaptation Module (MC71107B) will be awarded a PG-Diploma Script Writing.

### **MA in Script Writing**

The Long Form Project (MC71067A) is developed over three terms and this is the major assignment for the MA Script Writing programme

In parallel with this, each writer will complete a REFLECTION ESSAY which is a separate module (MC71071B). In addition to the Long Form Project module and the Reflection Essay module, MA Script Writing students must choose one of the following two dedicated script writing modules:

SHORT FORM SCRIPT (MC71106A) OR ADAPTATION AND SCRIPT EDITING (MC71107B).

In the autumn term, workshops, exercises and group discussions will facilitate the imaginative creative process leading to the production of a PORTFOLIO which in a varied way will outline the shape and tone and creative impetus of the chosen piece.

In the Spring term detailed work on structure will culminate in the production of a detailed STEP OUTLINE which breaks the story of the piece down into linked beats, with three beats comprising a 'step'.

By the summer term, the writers are expected to have completed a FIRST DRAFT SCRIPT and through a process of group feedback, peer to peer feedback and one to one feedback from the tutor, this script will be developed into a SECOND DRAFT script.

## Academic year of study 1

Module Name	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
LONG FORM PROJECT	MC71067A	90	7	Compulsory	1,2,3
REFLECTION ESSAY	MC71071B	15	7	Compulsory	3
Optional modules to the value of 45 credits from an approved list in Media, Communications and Cultural Studies.	Various	45	7	Optional	1 or 2
EITHER  MC71106A Short Form Script  OR  MC71107B Adaptation	MC71106A OR MC71107B	30	7	Compulsory	1 or 2

## Academic Support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in a number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally.

All students are allocated a Personal Tutor (one in each department for joint programmes) who has overall responsibility for their individual progress and welfare. Personal Tutors meet with their student at least three a year either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically. The first meeting normally takes place within the first few weeks of the autumn term. Personal Tutors are also available to students throughout the year of study. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This provides an opportunity for progress, attendance and assessment marks to be reviewed and an informed discussion to take place about how to strengthen individual learning and success.

All students are also allocated a Senior Tutor to enable them to speak to an experienced academic member of staff about any issues which are negatively impacting their academic study and which are beyond the normal scope of issues handled by Programme Convenors and Personal Tutors.

Students are provided with information about learning resources, the [Library](#) and information available on [Learn.gold \(VLE\)](#) so that they have access to department/programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance.

Taught sessions and lectures provide overviews of themes, which students are encouraged to complement with intensive reading for presentation and discussion with peers at seminars. Assessments build on lectures and seminars so students are expected to attend all taught sessions to build knowledge and their own understanding of their chosen discipline.

All assessed work is accompanied by some form of feedback to ensure that students' work is on the right track. It may come in a variety of forms ranging from written comments on a marked essay to oral and written feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops.

Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is provided on the [Goldsmiths website](#) and for new students through new starter information and induction/Welcome Week. Any support recommendations that are made are agreed with the student and communicated to the department so that adjustments to learning and teaching are able to be implemented at a department level and students can be reassured that arrangements are in place. Opportunities are provided for students to review their support arrangements should their circumstances change. The [Disability](#) and [Wellbeing](#) Services maintain caseloads of students and provide on-going support.

The [Careers Service](#) provides central support for skills enhancement, running [The Gold Award](#) scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the Higher Education Achievement Report ([HEAR](#)).

The [Centre for Academic Language and Literacies](#) works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision for students throughout the year.

## **Placement opportunities**

There are no placement opportunities specific to this programme though opportunities may arise on an ad hoc basis and the programme convenor is active in promoting industry contacts for all the students and recent alumni.

## **Employability and potential career opportunities**

While no programme can guarantee a job afterwards, the structure of the MA Script Writing programme is designed to maximise employment opportunities. In addition to the industry standards achieved with the module content, there are numerous opportunities for students to make some of the contacts necessary for employment afterwards. The Visiting Tutors teaching on the programme are currently working in the industry. There are also frequent Masterclasses and talks with leading industry professionals. As the programme is well established, bringing former students back to talk about their professional work is a regular part of the programme. Very often, graduates from the programme keep in touch with each other, providing support and encouragement. Also there are several instances where graduates have started up their own companies, with considerable success.

## **Programme-specific requirements**

All writers are expected to purchase script writing software such as Final Draft or Fade In or to acquire free software of comparable quality for the production of feature film or television scripts.

## **Tuition fee costs**

Information on tuition fee costs is available at: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/students/fee-support/>

## **Specific programme costs**

Not applicable.