

Creative Writing: Advanced Poetry

| 7.1 Module Overview | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|----|------|---|
| Module Number | | Module Title | Creative Writing: Advanced Poetry | | | | | | |
| Stage of Principal Programme | | | 3 | Semester | 1 | Duration. (Weeks F/T) | 12 | ECTS | 5 |
| Mandatory / Elective (M/E) | E | Hours of Learner Effort / Week | 2 | | | | | | |
| Analysis of required hours of learning effort | | | | | | | | | |
| Teaching and Learning Modalities | | | | | ✓if relevant to this module | Approx. proportion of total (hours) | | | |
| Contact Hours | | | | | | | | | |
| In person face-to-face | | | | | ✓ | 24 | | | |
| Synchronous | | | | | | | | | |
| Indirect/Non-Contact Hours | | | | | | | | | |
| Asynchronous | | | | | | | | | |
| Work Based | | | | | | | | | |
| Other: | | | | | | | | | |
| • Portfolio Preparation | | | | | ✓ | 60 | | | |
| • Reading and Independent Study | | | | | ✓ | 21 | | | |
| • Exam Preparation | | | | | ✓ | 20 | | | |
| Total | | | | | | 125 | | | |

| Pre-Requisite Module, if any. Module # and Title | N/A |
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| Co-Requisite Module, if any. Module # and Title | N/A |
| Maximum number of learners per instance of the module | 20 |
| Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff working in this module. | |
| Role e.g., Tutor, Mentor, Lecturer, Research Supervisor, etc. | Qualifications & experience required |
| Lecturer | A lecturer with a level 9 qualification in Creative Writing or a good record of publication and demonstrable creative writing teaching experience. |
| | Staff - Learner Ratio X:Y 1: 20 |

| Assessment Techniques – percentage contribution | | | | | |
|---|-----|----------------------------|-----|------------------------|--|
| Continuous Assessment | 70% | Proctored Exam – in person | 30% | Practical Skills Based | |
| Project | | Proctored Exam - online | | Work Based | |
| Capstone (Y/N)? | N | If Yes, describe | | | |

| 7.2 Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes (MIMLOs) | |
|---|-----------------|
| MIMLO | Related MIPLO # |
| On completion of this module a learner will be able to: | |

| | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Compose an original body of poetry that combines a number of poetic features in a coherent and innovative fashion. | 3, 4, 7 |
| 2. Demonstrate an independent capacity to assess the achievements and value of a contemporary or classic poem. | 1, 2, 3 |
| 3. Respond to the varied traditions of poetry in a way that gives rise to generative readings and revisions of major poetic themes, tropes, and forms. | 1, 2, 4 |
| 4. Organize the analysis of poems into a coherent argument that addresses significant issues for the writing of poetry. | 1, 3, 7 |

7.3 Indicative Module Content, Organisation and Structure

In our workshop we will work on developing the craft of writing poems. Learners will encounter new terms and techniques so that they can become more confident readers and writers of poetry. Learners will explore in greater depth aspects of poetry like sound, diction, tone, voice, the poetic line, and a range of poetic forms. Participants will learn more about metaphor, simile and symbol. Learners will be encouraged to submit a few of their poems to magazines for consideration for publication during this module. They will be guided through this process.

During the module learners will critically examine a range of contemporary poems; including, but not restricted to: Gunn, Plath, Rich, Strand, Glück, Merwin, Heaney, Mahon, Longley, Boland, Meehan, Grennan, Quinn. The range here will be both national and international in character.

Learners who take this module must enter the annual Carlow College Literary Awards and Creative Writing Showcase. This event happens every year in VISUAL, and it sees members of the Creative Writing classes showcase their work, as well as producing annual award winners. A high-level creative writing practitioner presents the literary awards every year, gives a reading from their work and answers questions about writing and publication over the evening. Through their participation in this competition learners will discover what is involved in entering a competition run along professional lines, develop the presentation skills expected of a professional writer, and know what is involved in turning up to an awards ceremony suitably prepared and ready to engage with the event.

7.4 Work-based learning and practice-placement *(if applicable)*

N/A

7.5 Specific module resources required *(if applicable)*

N/A

7.6 Application of programme teaching, learning and assessment strategies to this module

Given the formative aspect of this course, how the poetry can only develop through close reading, critique, revision and rewriting, and the very nature of this module as a workshop-based learning experience, the learner/staff ratio must be low. This is a teaching/facilitation intensive module. As such it presents a very good model for learning, but this all rests on the material factor of a relatively small number of participants in the workshop. Class participation will be encouraged and pursued. Moodle support will be used; techniques and ideas regarding approaches to learning as well as module content specific to poetry and creative writing. Typically, the workshop will examine work relevant to the type or form of poetry we wish to explore at a given point in the course. Thus, if we are examining the prose poem, alongside writing satire, we might examine poems from Simon Armitage's *Seeing Stars* (London: Faber, 2010), which might be usefully classified as satirical prose poems on contemporary consumerist society. We would close read poems like 'The Personal Touch', '15:30 by the Elephant House', and 'Knowing What We Know Now', examining voice, tone, line length,

imagery, subject matter, simile/metaphor. We would look at definitions and examples of both 'satire' and 'the prose poem' in John Drury's excellent *The Poetry Dictionary* (Cincinnati: Writers' Digest, 2006). And consider these alongside the poems. Thus, we are extending the participants repertoire in relation to form and technique, as well as increasing their exposure to and familiarity with contemporary poetry and an important living UK-based poet. To solidify our insights and to develop our practice, learners would then respond to a prompt, a series of ideas and suggestions that invites them to write their own prose poem satire on a contemporary theme, and to incorporate elements of Armitage's form and technique.

60% is available for a portfolio of poems produced during the term and submitted (the revised versions of the poems) by the end of term. Every workshop learners will start work on a new poem, a version of which will be submitted to the course tutor at the next session for subsequent comment and analysis. This is handed back to the learner at the next session. In this way, work is continually being created and reviewed over the course of the module. This is how the poetry portfolio becomes a piece of formative and summative assessment. The portfolio will consist of 8 -10 poems that have been started in the workshop by the learner and which have then been subsequently revised in the light of comment from the course tutor, and further learning and practice during the series of workshops, and it is the core assessment feature of the module. It is submitted near the end of the module.

Finally, 30% for a final exam of 1 and a 1/2 hours duration where learners answer two questions in which they are asked to analyse a poem, generally one seen and one unseen. This is a form of summative assessment. The exam is a useful mode for approaching an unseen poem, where learners' skills in reading new poetry are tested. Attendance (10%) is vital for the success of the module.

7.7 Summative Assessment Strategy for this module

| MIMLOs | Technique(s) | Weighting |
|--------|---|-----------|
| 1, 3 | Poetry Portfolio Typically, ten original poems are presented in their final version. They will have been revised and rewritten in the light of comments made by the course tutor and in the light of further learning acquired during the module. | 60% |
| 2, 4 | Proctored Exam Learners will have to respond to two questions, one for a poem seen and studied during the module and one unseen, a poem where learners must demonstrate their ability to read a poem without any prior knowledge of it. | 30% |
| | Attendance | 10% |

7.8 Sample Assessment Materials

Exam:
Sample questions:

'Even in the loose form of free verse it is possible to generate significant poetic effects. Perhaps the greatest possibility opened up by this form is the opportunity to generate the effect of a natural speaking voice.'

Critically evaluate this statement based on a close reading of Frank Ormsby's 'Untroubled' and Lucille Clifton's 'satchmo' Pay particular attention to the deployment of **at least three** effective poetic techniques in each poem.

Untroubled

Caesar is flattening Gaul
by the light of our Tilley.
My father has slept
with his mouth open
since the beginning of the war.
My mother is on a cleaning campaign
in the furthest corners of her empire.

The frozen centre of the night
is a dog's yowl released between hills.
I am translating from the Latin.
It is 1962, JFK smiles from our mantelpiece.
Before the decade is out
we will fear the unmarked car in the lay-by,
the live device thrown into the garden.
But on this quiet night
logs are burning in the stove
and a dog in the hills
is fashioning a winter elegy.

Frank Ormsby

from *The Rain Barrel* (Newcastle: Bloodaxe Books, 2019)

satchmo

he disremembers why he started grinning
this old great one
standing behind his cornet.
something to do with
new orleans as a girl
and the old men following death down rampart street.
he disremembers why, only now
always he comes with music
and with grinning
and we are glad
we sing with this old great one
who has something to do with life
grinning at love and death.

Lucille Clifton

from *The Collected Poems of Lucille Clifton 1965 – 2010* (New York: Boa Editions, 2012)

Marking of assessments will be in line with the Marking Assessment Guidelines as outlined in Section 3.3 of the College's [Regulations in Relation to Assessment and Standards](#) unless otherwise indicated.

7.9 Indicative reading lists and other information resources

Indicative Core Reading:

A wide range of contemporary poems will be made available to learners through handouts.

Indicative Other Resources:

Behn, Robin, and Twichell, Chase, (ed.), *The Practice of Poetry: Writing Exercises from Poets Who Teach* (New York: Collins Reference, 2005)

Doty, Mark, *The Art of Description: World into Word* (Minneapolis: Graywolf Press, 2010)

Fenton, James, *An Introduction to English Poetry* (London: Penguin, 2003)

Oliver, Mary, *Rules for the Dance: A Handbook for Writing and Reading Metrical Verse* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998)

Sansom, Peter, *Writing Poems* (Newcastle: Bloodaxe, 1993)

Sweeney, Matthew, and Williams, John Hartley, *Write Poetry: And Get It Published* (London: Hodder Education, 2010)

Irish Poetry Reading Archive (UCD Digital Collection):

<https://digital.ucd.ie/view/ucdlib:38488>

The Poetry Foundation:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/>