

Creative Writing: Poetry

Section A: Headline Information	
Module title	Creative Writing: Poetry
Module NFQ level (only if an NFQ level can be demonstrated)	7/8
Module number/reference	TBC
Module Co-ordinator	Dr Derek Coyle
Parent programme(s)	BA (Honours) in Arts and Humanities
Stage of parent programme	2
Semester (semester1/semester2 if applicable)	1
Module credit units (FET/HET/ECTS)	ECTS
Module credit number of units	5
List the teaching and learning modes	Workshop, class-work, critical writing, close-reading skills, creative writing, portfolio preparation, presentation/publication/competition skills, examination.
Entry requirements (statement of knowledge, skill and competence)	Successful completion of Stage 1 of the programme or equivalent is required.
Pre-requisite module titles	N/A
Co-requisite module titles	N/A
Is this a capstone module? (Yes or No)	No
Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff (staff includes workplace personnel who are responsible for learners such as apprentices, trainees and learners in clinical placements)	Module co-ordinators, lecturers and tutors must have a minimum Level 9 qualification in English.
Maximum number of learners per module	60 (split into groups of 15)
Duration of the module	1 Semester
Average (over the duration of the module) of the contact hours per week (see * below)	2
Module-specific physical resources and support required per centre (or instance of the module)	Classroom, library, study space, the hiring of VISUAL.
Analysis of required learning effort	
*Effort while in contact with staff	

Classroom and demonstrations		Mentoring and small-group tutoring		Other		Directed e-learning (hours)	Independent learning (hours)	Other hours (mini-assignment and exam)	Work-based learning hours of learning effort	Total effort (hours)
Hours	Minimum ratio teacher/learner	Hours	Minimum ratio teacher/learner	Hours	Minimum ratio teacher/learner					
24	1: 10						80	21		125 hours
Allocation of marks (within the module)										
				Continuous assessment	Supervised project	Proctored practical examination	Proctored written examination	Total		
Percentage contribution				20%	50%		30%	100%		

Section B: Module Descriptor

Rationale for Inclusion of the Module in the Programme and its Contribution to the Overall IPLOs

This module indicates the ambition of Carlow College as a College of the Humanities firmly grounded in its location in the town of Carlow and its immediate hinterland, and within the wider regional context of the south-east of Ireland. As this module reveals the desire of Carlow College to make a vital contribution to the living arts and to contemporary artistic expression in Ireland. In doing this Carlow College is playing a role in maintaining and developing one of the most ancient of arts known to humanity, the art of poetry, and one of the arts in which Ireland has particularly distinguished itself internationally. Two of Ireland's Nobel laureates were poets, W. B. Yeats and Seamus Heaney, and a third also practiced the art in a minor way, Samuel Beckett.

It is the ambition of this module to take participants to the highest level of the revised Bloom's taxonomy, insofar as participants in this module are required to put together poetic elements in such a way as to form a coherent or functional new whole. In their poems participants have to reorganize the elements they have encountered in the poems studied into new patterns or structures, thereby generating new poems from older models. This level of creation requires participants to recombine poetic elements in a new way, or, in the terms of the taxonomy, to synthesize parts studied into something new and different, thereby creating a new form or product. This process is the most difficult mental function in the new Bloom's taxonomy, and in demanding of our learners that they work at this level, this module makes a vital contribution to this programme.

Module Aims and Objectives	<p>This module aims to develop a passionate enthusiasm for the art of poetry in Carlow College, such that a contribution is made to the development of poetry in the culture and lives of people living in the town, its hinterland, and indeed in the southeast region. It aspires to achieve this through the development of competent practitioners and teachers, who have gained an insight into the range of poetry that is being written in both Ireland and further afield. One of our course objectives is to increase participants' knowledge of what is happening in the field, through exposure to major exponents of the art, and in the development of the skillset required to analyse and appreciate the achievements of contemporary poets. More importantly, the module challenges its participants to demonstrate their belief in the art by devoting time and resources to acquiring the techniques and skills required to produce their own original body of work. In doing this, the course aims to make a contribution to the continuing tradition of English language poetry in Ireland.</p>
Minimum Module Learning Outcomes	<p>On successful completion of this module, learners should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Judge with confidence the particular achievements of a contemporary poet based on a close reading of a poem. (MIPLO 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8) 2. Demonstrate an ability to analyse the connections between form and theme in the close reading of a poem using the technical vocabulary of poetry: the poetic line, enjambment, line breaks, couplets, quatrains, and figurative language, for example. (MIPLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). 3. Produce a body of original work that exhibits competence with the poetic line, enjambment, line breaks, free verse, couplets, the quatrain, and imagery, for example. (MIPLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8). 4. Demonstrate learners' capacity to be self-reflexive poetry practitioners proficient in their discrimination and judgement. (MIPLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8).
Information Provided to Learners about the Module	<p>College Prospectus specifies module name, stage and ECTS.</p> <p>College website and programme handbook to contain (in addition to above) short description of module content, module learning outcomes, prerequisite modules, and assessment mechanisms.</p> <p>Module handbook to contain (in addition to above) schedule of classes and topics, detailed assessment information with titles and submission dates, full bibliography and list of learning resources.</p> <p>Diploma Supplement contains module name, code, stage and ECTS.</p>
Module Content, Organisation and Structure	<p>We will begin by looking at the contemporary poem. A good place to start is Paula Meehan's 'My Father Perceived as St Francis'; where we will examine the poetic line, line-breaks, enjambment, diction, listing, imagery, and cultural context.</p> <p>We will proceed from there to other poems about family: grandparents, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters. These will be poems of memory, of people and places. From the perspective of poetic technique, we will primarily focus on the basic unit of poetry: the line. In these readings we will have a close look at the line-break, enjambment, and some basic verse forms like couplets and quatrains.</p>

Poems examined could include Michael Longley's 'The Balloon', Dermot Healey's 'Tongs', Edward Hirsch's 'Special Orders', Michael Crummy's 'Boys' and 'Girls'. Through a series of prompts learners will be invited to create their own poems about family.

We will also consider what is poetic voice, and the importance of the aural to poetry as an art – the music of poetry. We will look at Langston Hughes' 'Fire' and Liz Berry's 'Sow'. We will look at selections from Walt Whitman. Here we will pay particular attention to the language; its musicality and originality/freshness. Again, a series of prompts will focus in on the musicality of poetry and learners might incorporate this element into their poetry.

We will look at poems about objects; poems like Eamon Grennan's 'Dublin-Poughkeepsie: Bread Knife in Exile', Michael Longley's 'The Amish Rug', or Seamus Heaney's 'The Harvest Bow'. Cavafy's great poems 'The Afternoon Sun' and 'The Mirror in the Hallway' will be examined. These workshops will open learners' eyes to what's around them; and to seeing these objects as concrete ways into thinking and talking about abstract concepts like memories, relationships, death, love, etc.

We will consider ekphrastic poetry, poetry responding to art. We will look at poems about paintings, Thom Gunn's 'Painting by Vuilliard', for example, or Edward Hirsch's 'Edward Hopper and the House by the Railroad.' Also, poems about art by Derek Mahon, Robin Robertson, Sujata Bhatt. Learners will all be given a postcard from an art gallery; a range of paintings will be presented, from the classic international masters like Caravaggio, Matisse, Picasso, Hopper, to less well known artists, along with great Irish artists like Jack B. Yeats. Learners will create their own ekphrastic poem in response to these works.

We will look at poems in translation, the influence of Akhmatova on Irish poetry, Irish poets' versions of Cavafy poems, and the great Chinese masters, Du Fu, Li Bai, Wang Wei. Looking at different translations of the same poems, by Sean Dunne and W.S. Merwin or Stanley Kunitz, for example, learners begin to appreciate the valencies of particular words and the choices that poet's make. Learners will examine versions of other language poets by Kenneth Rexroth, his translations from the Chinese, alongside Derek Mahon and Michael Longley. They will be invited to do their own poems 'after' these masters.

Learners who take this module have to 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 in the course of 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.

Poems chosen for the workshops may draw on material from the following, but we are not restricted to it; from international poetry: Mahmoud Darwish, Mary Oliver,

	<p>Derek Walcott, Mark Strand, Thom Gunn, Michael Crummy, Ruth Padel, Louise Glück, C.P. Cavafy, Li Bai, Du Fu, Wang Wei, Chu Shu Chen, Kenneth Rexroth; and from Ireland, poems by Paula Meehan, Michael Longley, Seamus Heaney, Justin Quinn, Dermot Healey, Eamon Grennan, Matthew Sweeney, Rita Ann Higgins.</p>
<p>Module Teaching and Learning Strategy</p>	<p>Workshops will consist of close reading of strong poems by leading national and international contemporaries, through which cornerstones of poetic craft will be examined and discussed. The core competency of close-reading will be cultivated through guided in-class close reading, analysis, and questioning.</p> <p>After examining a model poem by a professional on the theme of mother/son relations, for example, a poem in which a musical phrase is used, in which a strikingly original image is used, or long and then short lines, thus creating tension, learners will be asked to produce their own poem incorporating some of these elements. A poem like Michael Longley's 'The Balloon' can be drawn upon usefully in this way. An in-class guided prompt will be used here in order to initiate a series of thoughts around the theme. So then, the basic plan of each workshop runs something like this:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some initial writing on a theme, following a series of prompted or guided reflections; 2. The close examination of a model on the theme, considering and evaluating the use of poetic techniques within the piece; 3. Further prompts are given suggesting new dimensions in which the initial draft might be taken (this is now draft two); 4. The reading of these drafts, often just a selection, from class members to others, with some discussion as to what is strong in these second drafts, and a consideration of what might be jettisoned or reconsidered, with suggestions/input from the class tutor; 5. Learners are instructed to work on these drafts at home over the course of the coming week and to submit a version of this poem the following week for critique by the course tutor. <p>Thus, a poem is produced nearly every week of the course, working towards the portfolio submission. These poems build on earlier work and techniques, incorporating new elements and techniques, as well as benefitting from input by class members and the course tutor. We can see how the workshops are designed to teach basic elements of poetic technique and to invite the learners to practice them in a consistent and progressive way. That is, each workshop seeks to build on previous lessons.</p> <p>The module assessments are designed to test various elements of poetic practice. It is essential that learners develop the habit of redrafting work and the 'Writing of My Poem' exercise is designed to model this, along with the self-reflexive component of the assessment which asks the learner to think about the decisions they make in drafting; the omission of lines, the re-positioning of lines and verses, the changing of words, the introduction of images, similes, or metaphors, etc. This type of thinking and action is primary to the crafting of poems.</p> <p>Learners need to practice the craft regularly, which they are encouraged to do by the building up of their portfolio. This body of work is built up in an incremental way,</p>

	<p>allowing for the accumulation of skills and the application of considered reflection based on the increasing exposure to new poems and new techniques over the duration of the module period. Learners have the opportunity before final submission of the portfolio to review the entire body of work in light of week on week comment on the work submitted by the learner to the course tutor, and in the light of new techniques and insights learned and gained over the duration of the module. Also, as informed by listening to comments and hearing the poetic practice of other course participants.</p> <p>Given the intensive learning and assessment strategy this workshop can only work with low numbers. Therefore, a low tutor/learner ratio is essential.</p>
Work-Based Learning and Practice-Placement	Non-applicable
E-Learning	<p>Moodle will be used to present course material and to provide links to readings and discussions of poetry from University websites, like the poetry classes delivered on-line by Yale. Also, to provide links to classic portals into poetry like the Academy of American Poetry and the Poetry Foundation. The Woodbury Poetry Room in Harvard University is another rich on-line source that will be used. UCD have also put on line an excellent Irish Poetry Reading Collection that will be used.</p>
Specifications for Module Staffing Requirements	<p>A lecturer with a level nine qualification specialising in poetry is required here. Publications in the area of poetry would be advantageous also.</p> <p>Staff:Learner ratio is typical of the overall programme approach with a maximum of 15 learners per group.</p> <p>Staffing requirements: 1 lecturer.</p>
Module Summative and Formative Assessment Strategy	<p>In terms of the assessment strategy for this module, 20% will be awarded for one poem submitted in three drafts with a short reflective essay on 'The Writing of My Poem' (750 words) in which learners discuss the decisions they made in the course of starting, writing, and redrafting this poem. This is a formative piece of assessment which aims to develop the self-reflective practice of the learner. It is also a prompt to help them to practice the re-drafting of poems, a primary discipline in the craft of poetry.</p> <p>Then, 50% is available for a portfolio of poems produced in the course of the term and submitted (the revised versions of the poems) by the end of term. In 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 in the course of the series of workshops, and it is the core assessment feature of the module. It is submitted near the end of the module.</p> <p>Finally, 30% for a final exam of 1 and a 1/2 hour duration where learners answer two questions in which they are asked to analyse a poem and to write a poem. This</p>

	<p>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. It also gives them an opportunity to test their creative ability to respond to a writing prompt in a given time-frame. Thus, it allows them to flex the creative muscles they have developed in the course of the module.</p>
<p>Sample Assessment Materials</p>	<p>Typical exam questions might look like this:</p> <p>Critically evaluate the degree to which Michael Longley's formal choices and use of poetic elements add to the development of his theme in 'The Balloon'.</p> <p><i>The Balloon</i> You are a child in the dream and not my mother. I float above your head as in a hot air balloon That casts no shadow on you looking up at me And smiling and waving and running without a limp Across the shallow streams and fields of shiny grass As though there were neither malformation nor pain. This is the first time ever I have seen you running. You are a child in the dream and not my mother Which may be why I call out from the balloon to you: 'Jump over the hedges, Connie, jump over the trees.'</p> <p><i>Michael Longley</i> And then: write the poem 'Before Time Changed Them' as an 'after Cavafy'. That is, adapt the poem to Irish-English, 'translate' it into the modern world, or some experience or perception of your own. Your drafting process should be evident in your exam answer book.</p> <p><i>Before Time Changed Them</i> They were full of sadness at their parting. That wasn't what they themselves wanted: it was circumstances. The need to earn a living forced one of them to go far away—New York or Canada. The love they felt wasn't, of course, what it once had been; the attraction between them had gradually diminished, the attraction had diminished a great deal. But to be separated, that wasn't what they themselves wanted. It was circumstances. Or maybe Fate appeared as an artist and parted them now, before their feeling died out completely, before Time altered them: the one seeming to remain for the other always what he was, the exquisite young man of twenty-four.</p> <p><i>Cavafy</i></p>
<p>Reading Lists and Other Information Resources</p>	<p><u>Essential Reading:</u> Herbert, W.N., <i>Writing Poetry</i> (Oxford: Routledge, 2009)</p> <p>Kooser, Ted, <i>The Poetry Home Repair Manual: Practical Advice for Beginning Poets</i> (Nebraska: Bison Books, 2007)</p>

	<p>Kowitz, Steve, <i>In the Palm of Your Hand: The Poet's Portable Workshop</i>, 2nd edn (Maine: Tilbury House, 2017)</p> <p>Longenbach, James, <i>The Art of the Poetic Line</i> (Minneapolis: Graywolf Press, 2008)</p> <p>Other Reading: Addonizio, Kim, <i>Ordinary Genius: A Guide for the Poet Within</i> (New York: Norton, 2012)</p> <p>Drury, John, <i>The Poetry Dictionary</i> (Cincinnati: Writer's Digest, 2006)</p> <p>Oliver, Mary, <i>A Poetry Handbook</i> (Orlando: Harcourt Books, 1994)</p> <p>Bryant Voight, Ellen, <i>The Art of Syntax</i> (Minneapolis: Graywolf Press, 2009)</p> <p>Essential Viewing: Irish Poetry Reading Archive (UCD Digital Collection): https://digital.ucd.ie/view/ucdlib:38488</p> <p>The Poetry Foundation: https://www.poetryfoundation.org/</p>
<p>Module Physical Resource Requirements</p>	<p>Handouts will be provided to learners regularly. A range of reading material, and the core texts mentioned here, will be available in the college library. Internet access in the classroom will be called upon. Learners will need to access online material through college computers.</p>