

## The Virtues of Poetry

<b>Module Number</b>		<b>Module Title</b>	The Virtues of Poetry: what poetry is and why poetry matters						
<b>Stage of Principal Programme</b>			1	<b>Semester</b>	2	<b>Duration.</b> (Weeks F/T)	12	<b>ECTS</b>	5
<b>Mandatory / Elective (M/E)</b>	M	<b>Hours of Learner Effort / Week</b>	2.3						
<b>Analysis of required hours of learning effort</b>									
<b>Teaching and Learning Modalities</b>					<b>✓if relevant to this module</b>		<b>Approx. proportion of total (hours)</b>		
<b>Contact Hours</b>									
In person face-to-face					✓		28		
Synchronous									
<b>Indirect/Non-Contact Hours</b>									
Asynchronous									
Work Based									
Other:									
• Independent Reading					✓		7		
• Mini-Essay					✓		30		
• Exam Preparation					✓		60		
<b>Total</b>							125		

<b>Pre-Requisite Module, if any. Module # and Title</b>	N/A	
<b>Co-Requisite Module, if any. Module # and Title</b>	N/A	
<b>Maximum number of learners per instance of the module</b>	45	
<b>Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff working in this module.</b>		
<b>Role e.g., Tutor, Mentor, Lecturer, Research Supervisor, etc.</b>	<b>Qualifications &amp; experience required</b>	<b>Staff - Learner Ratio X:Y</b>
Lecturer	A minimum level 9 qualification in English Literature or closely cognate area	1: 45
Tutor	A minimum level 9 qualification in English Literature or closely cognate area	1:20

<b>Assessment Techniques – percentage contribution</b>					
<b>Continuous Assessment</b>	40%	<b>Proctored Exam – in person</b>	60%	<b>Practical Skills Based</b>	
<b>Project</b>		<b>Proctored Exam - online</b>		<b>Work Based</b>	
<b>Capstone (Y/N)?</b>	N	<b>If Yes, describe</b>			

### 7.2 Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes (MIMLOs)

<b>MIMLO</b> On completion of this module a learner will be able to:	<b>Related MIPLO #</b>
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1. Read any poem closely with some confidence that they can carry out a 'strong' (convincing) reading of the poem whilst writing about the poem in a coherent and convincing way, articulating a literary argument in their own voice.	<b>1, 3, 7</b>
2. Analyse poetry from a variety of perspectives, informed by classic and contemporary poems; theme, form, context, argument.	<b>1, 3, 8</b>
3. To apply the critical vocabulary of poetry with precision and accuracy; that is, to know what diction, the line and lineation, line-breaks, run-on and end-stopped lines are; figurative language: personification, apostrophe, metaphor, simile; verse forms: couplets, quatrains, quintains; and finally, oxymoron, and synaesthesia; and to be able to identify these techniques in poems.	<b>1, 3, 7</b>

### 7.3 Indicative Module Content, Organisation and Structure

In this course we will read poems together, closely, intently, analytically; a great range and variety of them. We will examine and evaluate the significance and importance of individual words, syntax, and the poetic line, alongside images, simile and metaphor. We will explore verse forms and poetic conventions. We will recognise and evaluate a variety of poetic tropes and figures. We will identify and define a range of poetic rhythms and metre, sounds and rhyme.

Learners will be encouraged to discover, develop, and strengthen their own critical voices. They will be exposed to the critical vocabulary that has been developed to articulate and comprehend the many strategies by which a great poem exists.

Our selection of poems will include mainly contemporary poets, primarily drawn from English language traditions, but not exclusively. These may include a selection from the following, amongst others: Lucille Clifton, Billy Collins, John Montague, Seamus Heaney, Medbh McGuckian, Rita Ann Higgins, Terrance Hayes, Langston Hughes, Eavan Boland, Les Murray, Paula Meehan, Derek Walcott, Philip Larkin, Carol Ann Duffy, Simon Armitage, John Milton, William Shakespeare, and Michael Longley.

### 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

This module aims to inspire confidence in learners that when they encounter poems that they will be able to read them, comprehend them, and analyse them. This course aims to inspire a love and appreciation for the art of poetry in learners, based on the knowledge that poetry is difficult to write, and by their ability to grasp and demonstrate the multifaceted dimensions of a poem. This course aims to produce advocates of poetry in the public and educational domain, based on their understanding of the many traditions of poetry, and through their mastery of the language used to articulate the complex combination of elements that are held in tension in poetry.

The teaching strategy will consist of lectures in which contexts will be explored, the craft and technique of poetry discussed, and in which close reading of a wide range of poems will be initiated and demonstrated. Class participation will be encouraged and pursued. In-class guided activities will be engaged with; such as question sheets based on the lecture content; language learning games like crosswords, word searches and anagrams, focusing on the critical vocabulary distinct to poetry. Moodle support will be used; techniques and ideas regarding approaches to learning as well as module content specific to poetry. Tutorials will provide

extra material to explore and allow learners the opportunity to practice and develop their own voice, applying individually critical skills discussed in the lectures.

Assessment of this module is by writing a mini-essay or poem (30%), which will be formative in nature, and an exam (60%), which will be formative and summative. Attendance (10%) is essential to the module.

The mini assignment will typically consist of a critical analysis of a poem. Learners should demonstrate their ability to close read a poem and utilize the technical vocabulary by which critics discuss poetry. Learners might also be given the opportunity to write a poem and self-reflective essay about the writing of the poem, which sees them respond to a prompt and which aims to see techniques encountered in the 'professional' poems studied by the learner in their own original piece. These exercises will be formative in nature, preparing the learner for the exam.

In the exam learners will write answers that provide a critical analysis of two poems. There will be a fruitful tension here, an opportunity to explore the differences and similarities between the pieces: in what ways are they different in terms of diction, form and style, and in what way are they both species of poetry? This essay will be summative as it will draw on all the experience and exposure the learner has had in class, what they have learned through the shorter written piece and class discussions, as well as being formative in relation to the rest of the English component of the degree programme. In this course learners are being prepared for later encounters with poetry.

7.7 Summative Assessment Strategy for this module		
MIMLOs	Technique(s)	Weighting
1, 3	<p><b>Mini-Essay/Writing a Poem:</b> The learners' essay will consist of a critical analysis of a poem demonstrating their ability to close read, utilizing the technical vocabulary critics use to discuss poetry.</p> <p>Learners might write a poem with a short critical analysis of how they wrote the poem, inspired by aspects of technique and form as demonstrated by poems explored and discussed in class.</p>	30%
1, 2, 3	<p><b>Proctored Exam</b> Learners will provide a critical analysis of two poems, an opportunity to explore the differences and similarities between the pieces: in what ways are they different in terms of diction, form and style, and in what way are they both species of poetry?</p>	60%
	<b>Attendance</b>	10%

7.8 Sample Assessment Materials
<p><b>Essay:</b> A typical essay question might consist of something like this:</p> <p>'Lineation is central to poetry, as lineation orchestrates order out of the chaos of life. It measures out the ever-flowing line of thought, feeling, and perception, into an achieved whole which lives in rhythm.'</p> <p>Critically evaluate this statement based on a close reading of <b>at least one poem</b> you have studied on this module.</p> <p>or</p> <p>'One of the things poetry communicates is how it pays close and precise attention to experience, and therefore, one of the values of reading poetry is that it trains us to follow subtle and complex trains of thought.'</p> <p>Critically evaluate this statement based on a close reading of <b>at least one poem</b> you have studied on this module.</p>

**Exam:** A typical exam question might look like:

'Poetry uses words to create a voice for any number of purposes - to express feeling, shape argument, describe the world, tell stories, dramatize character. Poetry takes special care over what it says and how it says it, and so invites us to read with greater care and patience. Poems are especially resourceful and imaginative in how they handle the expressive possibilities of language.'

Critically evaluate this statement based on a close reading of **at least two** poems you have studied on this module.

or,

'When it comes to poetry, patient attentiveness to the shape and substance of a poem's words is the foundation and fountain of all further understanding. Our attention should consider, at the very least, the poem's form, the poet's choice of language or diction, and the poet's particular arrangement of ideas.'

Critically evaluate this statement based on a close reading of **at least two** poems you have studied on this module.

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 provided on handouts.

Wolosky, Shira, *The Art of Poetry: How to Read a Poem* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

### **Indicative Other Resources:**

O'Donoghue, Bernard *Poetry: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019)

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

Hodgson, Andrew, *The Cambridge Guide to Reading Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021)

Longenbach, James, *The Virtues of Poetry* (Minnesota: Graywolf Press, 2013)

Parini, Jay, *Why Poetry Matters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009)

Ramazani, Jahan, *Poetry and Its Others: News, Prayer, Song, and the Dialogue of Genres* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014)

Wainwright, Jeffrey, *Poetry: The Basics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford: Routledge, 2011)

### **Essential Viewing:**

Irish Poetry Reading Archive (UCD Digital Collection): <https://digital.ucd.ie/view/ucdlib:38488>

The Poetry Foundation: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/>