

MA London Studies

School of English and Drama
Department of Geography
Department of Politics





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The College reserves the right to modify or cancel any statement in it and accepts no responsibility for the consequences of any such changes.

Introduction

London has long been an international centre of cultural production and political power. This interdisciplinary Masters programme takes the city as its focus, using London as a central example, resource and inspiration. From the world of eighteenth-century coffee houses, to the 'metro-intellectuals' of the Romantic era and the vibrant creative life of the modern-day postcolonial city, the programme brings together historical and contemporary perspectives on metropolitan culture, through approaches that span the humanities and social sciences. The MA in London Studies is collaboratively taught, drawing upon expertise across the Departments of Geography and Politics and the School of English and Drama. This results in an attractive and distinctive Masters programme, driven by the research interests of academic staff and rooted in vital and intellectually important concerns.

The MA in London Studies makes the most of Queen Mary's position, being close to key cultural resources and institutions in London, while located in the city's East End where many of the programme's intellectual concerns find most vivid expression. Dramatic historical changes, along with contemporary and future transformations of this part of the city provide ample opportunities for scholarly reflection and debate as well as for engaging with practices and institutions within and beyond the academy.

This programme is of particular interest to those wishing to deepen their intellectual understanding of key aspects of the cultural history and contemporary cultural life of London, as well as developing a range of advanced analytical and research skills. This knowledge and experience will have considerable transferable value in the labour market. Graduates will be especially well equipped to pursue careers in the metropolitan arts and cultural sectors. The research training offered by the programme also provides a suitable basis for undertaking PhD research and is therefore a potential stepping-stone to an academic career.



MA London Studies

The course is taught by international experts in the School of English and Drama and Departments of Politics and Geography who provide a unique interdisciplinary perspective on London cultures past and present.

Academic staff in all three participating departments have made landmark contributions to the historiography of London and to ways of understanding and theorising contemporary metropolitan life. They have many well-established research and teaching links with external organisations and institutions in the metropolitan arts (for example Artangel, LIFT: London International Festival of Theatre) and cultural sectors (for example the Museum of London, Geffrye Museum and the V&A), and, where possible, seek to draw these into the course programme.

Course structure

The programme is based around a core course *Cities and Modernity* that considers a number of influential perspectives on understanding modern metropolitan life. Referring to London as an example, but setting it in the context of other cities across the world, the course explores how modern cities are experienced, represented and contested, and provides an important conceptual basis for other elements of the programme.

A core advanced level research training course, delivered by the Department of Geography and the School of English and Drama, ensures that you will also receive a thorough grounding in archival and qualitative research methodologies. You are also introduced to and encouraged to use the unsurpassed resources for the study of

London available in the city: libraries, archives, museums, galleries, as well as sites and events. These include the British Library, the Museum of London, Guildhall Library and the London Metropolitan Archives. This training provides an essential preparation for a compulsory 15,000-word dissertation an independent research project on a topic defined by your own work and interests.

Specialist options

In addition to these compulsory elements of the programme, you will choose to study three of the following option courses:

Art, Performance and the City

This course provides a detailed examination of a series of cultural practices working to shape urban experience and spaces in the East End of London. Through an engagement with primary materials as well as site visits and walks, it aims to introduce you to the activities of cultural practitioners and artists (such as Tim Bennam, Janet Cardiff, Rachel Whiteread, and Iain Sinclair) who are involved in imagining, representing and performing the cultural geographies of the city.

Cities and Empire

This course deals with imperial and colonial cities. It seeks to understand how urban forms are shaped by imperial, colonial and postcolonial processes, and how those cities are central to the way that imperialism, colonialism and postcolonialism are understood and experienced. A central focus is on London, but the course also draws upon other cities, including Calcutta and Jerusalem.

MA London Studies (cont)

Empire, Race and Immigration

Focusing especially on London, this course examines how colonial and racial migrants experienced, contested and negotiated moving to Britain and the types of reactions they provoked over the last three hundred years. Particular emphasis is placed on how empire, race, class and gender informed both colonial and metropolitan attitudes.

Health, Housing and Education of Immigrants in a Metropolitan Environment

Using an historical foundation, this course sets out to identify the contemporary issues which surround the health, housing and education of immigrants in a metropolitan environment. It uses East London as a case study to enable students to acquire an awareness of the social, political and cultural conditions which result from the concentration of minority groups in a restricted urban space. Students will receive instruction from both academics and practitioners in the relevant fields.

Metro-intellectuals, 1770-1820: British Women Writers in London and Paris

This course focuses on the works of four important women intellectuals in the period of enlightenment reform and romantic radicalism. Anna Laetitia Barbauld, Mary Wollstonecraft, Helen Maria Williams, and Mary Robinson all participated in the debates and at times, the events of agitation for domestic political reform in Britain and international revolution as proposed by the events in the American and French Revolutions. While this module aims to address the particular situation of women intellectuals with strong ties to metropolitan

experience, it will place these writers in relation to the debates at large in the period.

Sociability: Literature and the City 1660-1780

This course focuses on the representation of the city in the literature of the Restoration and eighteenth century. In this period, London was the largest and most prosperous city in Europe. The course debates how writers responded to the new experiences of city life, a form of sociability subsequently identified as the birth of urbanism. It will examine how this cultural and historical transformation can be read in and through experiments in literary genre and style in the period.

Urban Culture and the Book: London, Publishing and Readers in the Sixteenth Century

The course explores processes of publication and practices of reading in London in the sixteenth century, looking at the production and circulation of both manuscripts and printed books. Topics covered will include the relationship between authors and 'publishers' of various kinds; the workings of patronage; readers and their responses to the books they read; the implications of book format and design; editorial activities and processes of canon formation.

Writing the East End

This course considers the mythology of the East End of London as articulated and interrogated by literary texts. It focuses on the period from the turn of the twentieth century to the present day and examines the East End as a continuing site of public fascination and creative production. In particular, it explores the ways that fiction and prose writing have represented the East End as a

site of immigration, cross-class encounter, crime, political activism and memory.

Please note that we regularly change, update and add to our courses – for the latest details, see www.qmul.ac.uk/london-studies

This programme is subject to approval but is due to commence in 2007.

Teaching methods and resources

Most teaching takes place in small group seminar classes where there is ample opportunity to discuss and debate course related themes and issues. These are supplemented by a range of other teaching methods including site visits (to museums and archives), field walks and student-led conference presentations. There is also a substantial component of private study and reading. Assessment methods are equally varied, including: extended essays, book reviews, short reports, projects and presentations. There are no examinations. You will be allocated a research supervisor with whom you will meet on a regular, one-to-one basis throughout the course. There is also a dedicated MA London Studies tutor.

More broadly, you will become part of Queen Mary's lively intellectual culture and, over and above your studies, will be encouraged to attend and participate in the wide variety of seminars and talks given by distinguished visiting speakers. You will also have access to the excellent facilities and resources of the Graduate School in the Humanities and Social Sciences, including the new Graduate Centre, which occupies the refurbished and extended

Lock-keeper's Cottage by the Regent's Canal. You will have access to more specialist sources of research expertise such as the newly formed City Centre and the Centre for the Study of Migration.



Core current teaching staff

Professor Alison Blunt (Department of Geography)

Alison Blunt's research interests span cultural, feminist and postcolonial geographies, with a particular focus on imperial travel and domesticity and on geographies of home, identity and mixed descent. Her recent books include: *Domicile and Diaspora: Anglo-Indian Women and the Spatial Politics of Home* (2005) and *Home* (2006).

Professor Julia Boffey (School of English and Drama)

Julia Boffey's research and teaching are concerned with various aspects of literary and cultural production in the medieval and early modern periods. She is author of *Fifteenth-century English DreamVisions: An Anthology* (2005).

Professor Markman Ellis (School of English and Drama)

Markman Ellis's research focuses on historical approaches to eighteenth-century literature and culture. His publications include *The Coffee House: A Cultural History* (2005) and *The History of Gothic Fiction* (2001).

Professor Anne Janowitz (School of English and Drama)

Professor Janowitz's work focuses on late eighteenth-century and Romantic literary culture, and the history and theory of poetry and poetics. She is author of *Women Romantic Poets* (2005) and is currently working on a study of eighteenth and nineteenth-century London poetry, entitled *The Sky at Night: poetic commonplaces of urban light*.



Dr Anne Kershen (Department of Politics)

Anne Kershen works on immigration in London (both past and present), Anglo-Jewish history and labour history. Her most recent book is *Strangers, Aliens and Asians: Huguenots, Jews and Bangladeshis in Spitalfields 1660-2000* (2005)

Dr Shompa Lahiri (Department of Politics)

Shompa Lahiri's current research explores the relationship between empire, race and the colonial 'other' within the British metropolis. She is author of *Indians in Britain: Anglo-Indian Encounters, Race and Identity* (1999)

Professor Jon May (Department of Geography)

Jon May is interested in the social and cultural geography of cities. His recent research has focused on the geographies of street homelessness in British cities and migrant labour and low paid employment in contemporary London. He is author of *Swept up lives: Re-envisioning the Homeless City* (2007)

Professor Miles Ogborn (Department of Geography)

Miles Ogborn's research has explored the emergent 'spaces of modernity' in eighteenth-century London and the historical geography of state formation and spaces of discipline in nineteenth-century Britain. He is currently working on the historical geographies of globalisation 1492-1800. His publications include: *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780* (1998) and *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (2007)

Dr Alastair Owens (Department of Geography)

Alastair Owens's research focuses on the historical geographies of gender, wealth and investment in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and on the material culture of everyday life in Victorian cities. He is editor of *Women, Business and Finance in Nineteenth-Century Europe: Rethinking Separate Spheres* (2006) and review editor of the *London Journal*.

Dr David Pinder (Department of Geography)

David Pinder's research focuses on utopianism and cities, particularly in relation to the visions of twentieth-century modernist and avant-garde groups such as the situationists; and on art, spatial practices and the politics of urban space in London and New York. He is author of: *Visions of the City: Utopianism, Power and Politics in Twentieth-Century Urbanism* (2005).

Dr Nadia Valman (School of English and Drama)

Nadia Valman's research has focused on representations of Jews in British culture. She is currently working on literature and

immigration to the East End of London, and her most recent publications include: *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture* (2007) and 'The Jew' in *Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture: Between the East End and East Africa* (2006).

Further information

Information about fees is included in the Queen Mary Graduate School Prospectus, which will be sent on request. An application form for postgraduate courses is included in the prospectus. Alternatively see:

www.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/index.html

The Arts and Humanities Research Council offer studentships for Masters study in preparation for PhD Research, for which the closing date is 1 May each year. Details of eligibility and application procedures can be obtained from:

Arts and Humanities Research Council
Whitefriars
Lewins Mead
Bristol
BS1 2AE

Tel: +44 (0)117 987 6500
www.ahrc.ac.uk

How to apply

Applicants will normally be expected to possess a first or upper second class honours degree (or equivalent international qualification) in a humanities or social science subject. We actively encourage applications from students who have developed an interest in metropolitan history, culture or literature, urban and cultural geography, or urban politics at undergraduate level. We also welcome applications from cultural practitioners, professionals and others with an enthusiastic intellectual interest in London.

For further information or informal enquiries please contact:

The Admissions Tutor
London Studies
Department of Geography
Queen Mary, University of London
Mile End Road
London
E1 4NS
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7882 5400
email: london-studies@qmul.ac.uk
www.qmul.ac.uk/london-studies

Application forms can be requested from, and should be returned to:

The Admissions and Recruitment Office
Queen Mary, University of London
Mile End Road
London
E1 4NS
United Kingdom

email: admissions@qmul.ac.uk



Queen Mary, University of London: in the heart of the thriving East End

The area surrounding Queen Mary's Mile End Campus is culturally diverse and rich in history. For over 300 years, London's East End was the shipping and mercantile centre of the capital and home to enormous dockyards, stretching from Tower Bridge along the Thames into Essex and Kent. Because of its history as a port, there is a long tradition of immigration, integration and shifting populations, mirrored in the changing architecture, culture, religion, commerce and industry of the area. Since the College was established in 1885 as the People's Palace Technical Schools, the imposing façade of the Queens' Building has seen kaleidoscopic changes in its surroundings, no more so than over the last 25 years.

On and around Brick Lane, to the west of Queen Mary, the former garment factories and bagel shops have evolved into the curry houses and the Bollywood video emporia of London's 'Bangla Town'. The Whitechapel Road, adjacent to The Royal London Hospital and Queen Mary's new Medical School, is dominated by the East London Mosque (opened in 1985). In the last few years, the revitalised areas of Shoreditch and Hoxton have hosted a vibrant cultural scene, with Jay Jopling's White Cube 2 and the Whitechapel Art Gallery, and the studios and workshops of artists such as Tracey Emin.

The £12 million redevelopment of Mile End Park has improved the view from the new canal-side Westfield Student Village. A 'green bridge', designed by architect Piers Gough and opened in June 2002, links parkland, leisure and sporting facilities on either side of Mile End Road.



The twenty-first century sees the area once again on the brink of further transformation as construction begins on the sporting and infrastructure facilities for the London Olympic Games in 2012, which will have a dramatic impact on Queen Mary's environment.

The area has also long been significant in the formation of policies to tackle urban poverty and problems, thereby playing a crucial role in the development of the welfare state and the future not only of the capital but also the nation.

Postgraduate students are eligible for College accommodation both on the College campus and elsewhere in London, but East London also has a thriving – and for London unusually good value – private rented sector through which many students choose to live within walking distance of the campus.

**This guide has been produced by
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