

Poetry has produced some of the most memorable moments in English Literature and continues to be one of the most widely practised, if least understood, of all the arts. This course aims to introduce students to the craft of poetry by showing how you can tap into your creative energies and linguistic skills to write original and stimulating work.

Tutorials will take the form of workshops, which focus on the tools of the poet's craft, such as rhyme, rhythm, stanza, metre and the disciplines of free verse. By engaging with the work of other poets, and participating in writing exercises, you will learn about technique and poetic form, imagery and the diverse kinds of poetic language, as well as ways of generating ideas for subject matter and how to revise and edit your work. Advice will be given on how to go about getting your work published.

Tutorials will also serve as a forum for the critical discussion of students' work, and a willingness to offer, as well as respond to constructive criticism, is therefore essential.

Although the emphasis on this course is on writing, a vital aspect of learning how to *write* good poetry is to *read* good poetry, and this will feature strongly on the course. With this in mind poems from *Emergency Kit: Poems for Strange Times*, a set text, will be discussed in class. You are also encouraged to make use of the library, which has a large selection of poetry in English, as well as English translations of poetry written in other languages. Read widely, and when you come across a poet with whose work you feel a strong sympathy, read deeply. Originality stems from being open to a variety of literary influences.

Assessment

Assessment will take the form of two written assignments and one public reading.

The first assignment, worth 35% of the overall mark for the course, asks you to write a poem or poems, using an established form, such as terza rima, ballad, sonnet, villanelle or haiku, and to write a 1,000-word commentary on the demands and benefits of employing a formal poetic structure. The number of poems you will be required to write depends on your chosen form.

For the second assignment, worth 50% of the overall mark, you will submit a selection of your poetry together with a short introduction to your work.

Taking into account the demands of writing poetry, the written assignments equate to a workload of two 2,750 word academic essays. Detailed advice for each assignment will be provided by the tutor.

At the end of the course you will have the opportunity to read your poetry before an audience. Your reading will constitute 15% of the overall course mark.

Set Text

Matthew Sweeney and Jo Shapcott (Eds), 2004 *Emergency Kit: Poems for Strange Times*, London/Faber & Faber.

W.N Herbert and Matthew Hollis (Eds), 2000 *Strong Words: Modern Poets on Modern Poetry*, Newcastle/Bloodaxe

TUTOR: Dr Chris Powici