

Royal Holloway, University of London
Course specification for an undergraduate award
BA Comparative Literature and Culture BA with Integrated Foundation Year (Q2oF)

Section 1 – Introduction to your course

This course specification is a formal document, which provides a summary of the main features of your course and the learning outcomes that you might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if you take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, and in various handbooks, all of which you will be able to access online. Alternatively, further information on the College's academic regulations and policies can be found [here](#). Further information on the College's Admissions Policy can be found [here](#).

Your degree course in Comparative Literature and Culture with an integrated Foundation Year is delivered in four stages, each of which comprises one year of full-time study during which you must follow courses to the value of 120 credits.

The Foundation Year prepares you for university study by offering a rigorous introduction to university-level study methods and skills, transitioning from Level 3 to Level 4. It provides progressive structures in which you are able to gain ever-wider knowledge and understanding of approaches to humanities study and your chosen degree subject, together with embedded good academic practice and study skills, leading towards increasingly discipline specific modules which facilitate greater levels of specialisation and individual choice. The mandatory courses include a range of different expressive media (texts, images, objects, rituals, digital forms) from different historical periods, tested by a wide variety of assessment methods including (but not limited to) short written exercises and critical appreciations, Moodle-based quizzes, essays, examinations, poster presentations, blog/vlogs, short digital films, dissertations and personal development plans.

Upon progressing to the first year of your degree programme you take a combination of compulsory mandatory courses and optional courses. The mandatory courses introduce you to the principal literary genres, the core techniques and methodologies of comparatism, and contemporary critical and theoretical approaches, through a range of media and modes of cultural production taken from a variety of historical and geographical contexts. The optional courses, taken from those on offer to other students in the Department of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures, will complement the core teaching by providing a more detailed knowledge of specific literary and cultural figures, themes and movements. The structure encourages you, in stages two and three, to develop your own interests through informed choice among specialist options on offer in the Department of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures

While Royal Holloway keeps all the information made available under review, courses and the availability of individual modules, especially optional modules are necessarily subject to change at any time, and you are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect your decision to follow a specific course. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform you as soon as is practicable of any significant changes which might affect your studies.

The following is brief description for some of the most important terminology for understanding the content of this document:

Degree course – May also be referred to as 'degree programme' or simply 'programme', these terms refer to the qualification you will be awarded upon successful completion of your studies.

Module – May also be referred to as 'course', this refers to the individual units you will study each year to complete your degree course. Undergraduate degrees at Royal Holloway comprise a combination of modules in multiples of 15 credits to the value of 120 credits per year. On some degree courses a certain number of optional modules must be passed for a particular degree title.

Section 2 – Course details			
Date of specification update	May 2025	Location of study	Egham Campus
Course award and title	BA Comparative Literature and Culture	Level of study	Undergraduate
Course code	3442	UCAS code	Q20F
Year of entry	2025/26		
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department or school	Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures	Other departments or schools involved in teaching the course	N/A
Mode(s) of attendance	Full-time	Duration of the course	Four years
Accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirement(s)	N/A		
Link to Coursefinder for further information:	https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/	For queries on admissions:	https://royalholloway.ac.uk/applicationquery

Section 3 – Degree course structure

3.1 Mandatory module information

The following table summarises the mandatory modules which students must take in each year of study

Year	Module code	Module title	Credits	FHEQ level	Module status (see below)
0	FY0023	Culture and Memory	15	HE level 0	MC
0	FY0024	Cultures of Thinking	30	HE level 0	MC
0	FY0027	Society on Screen	15	HE level 0	MC
0	FY0028	Textual Cultures	15	HE level 0	MC
0	ML0001	Research Project and Reflection	30	HE Level 0	MNC
1	ML1203	CLC: Reading Texts: criticism for Comparative Literature	30	4	MC
2	ML2206	CLC: Histories of Representation	15	5	MC
2	ML2207	CLC: Critical and Comparative Approaches	15	5	MC

This table sets out the most important information for the mandatory modules on your degree course. These modules are central to achieving your learning outcomes, so they are compulsory, and all students on your degree course will be required to take them. You will be automatically registered for these modules each year. Mandatory modules fall into two categories; 'condonable' or 'non-condonable'.

In the case of mandatory 'non-condonable' (MNC) modules, you must pass the module before you can proceed to the next year of your course, or to successfully graduate with a particular degree title. In the case of mandatory 'condonable' (MC) modules, these must be taken but you can still progress or graduate even if you do not pass them. Please note that although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, changes to your degree course may be made where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events. For example; where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of external advisors, to enhance academic provision.

3.2 Optional modules

In addition to mandatory modules, there will be a number of optional modules available during the course of your degree. The following table lists a selection of optional modules that are likely to be available. However, not all may be available every year. Although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, new options may be offered or existing ones may be withdrawn. For example; where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of External Advisors, to enhance academic provision. There may be additional requirements around option selection; please contact the Department for further information.

At Stage 0 (Foundation Year), choose one module (15 credits) from:

FY0025 Data, Society and Policy (15 credits)

OR

FY0029 Digital Cultures (15 credits)

In stage one, students must take modules to the total of **90 credits** from a list of Stage One modules offered by the [Department](#).

In stage two, students must take modules to the value of **30 credits** from a range of Stage Two “ML” comparative modules and modules to the total of **60 credits** from a list of Stage Two modules offered by the [Department](#).

In stage three, students choose modules to the value of 120 credits from a list offered by the [Department](#).

Section 4 - Progressing through each year of your degree course

For further information on the progression and award requirements for your degree, please refer to Royal Holloway’s [Academic Regulations](#).

In order to progress from the Foundation Year to Year One you must pass all 120 credits. Opportunities for resits are detailed in the [Academic Regulations](#). Once progression has been confirmed, you may choose your preferred pathway which may include Single Honours Comparative Literature and Culture, a joint or minor degree with Comparative Literature and Culture, or variants within the Humanities (English (except pathways with Creative Writing), History, Drama, Media Arts, Classics, Philosophy, Liberal Arts). There is flexibility within the Programme for you to take your Department Based Project in one of the other departments in Humanities should you wish to follow an alternative pathway after progressing from your Foundation Year.

All first year students on single, joint or combined honours courses offered all or in part by the School of Humanities, School of Performing and Digital Arts, or department of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy are required to pass a Moodle-based writing skills quiz in order to progress into the second year of study. The pass mark for the test

is 60%. Certificates of Distinction are awarded to students who achieve at least 80% in the quiz. Students may attempt the quiz as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who meet the requirements for progression as stipulated in the [College's Undergraduate Regulations](#) (Section: Conditions for progression to the next stage) but fail to pass the Moodle-based quiz will not be permitted to progress into their second year of academic study at the College.

Section 5 – Educational aims of the course

The aims of this course are:

- to provide students with a knowledge of transnational literatures and cultures, through materials ranging from the literary to the cinematic, visual, theoretical and philosophical, without requiring specialist knowledge of any language other than English;
- to equip students with a solid grasp of the analytical tools and methods required to understand and interpret texts from a range of cultures, genres, media and periods;
- to engage students imaginatively in the process of reading and analysing literary texts and other cultural products, while enabling them to develop independent critical thinking and judgement;
- to develop students' understanding of the issues involved in comparative and interdisciplinary analysis; to develop and consolidate key transferable skills of critical analysis, written and oral expression, and the ability to understand, critically engage with and compare a range of materials from different cultures, periods, media and genres.

Section 6 - Course learning outcomes

In general terms, the courses provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. (*Categories – Knowledge and understanding (K), Skills and other attributes (S), and Transferable skills (*)*)

Theme	Course learning outcome	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
K1	<p>Broad and comparative knowledge of literature and culture from different periods and geographical areas.</p> <p>Understanding of the features and development of principle literary genres and other modes of cultural production.</p> <p>Understanding of the relationships and interfaces between literature and culture other disciplines.</p>	Develop knowledge and understanding of a wide range of expressive forms, from different historical periods, that underpin the study of literary, visual, and multimedia texts.	Recall key ideas about literature and culture from different periods and geographical areas. Recognise and contrast some of the different generic and stylistic features of literature and culture and recall key features of their historical development. Recognise intersections between literature and culture and other disciplines.	Identify key aspects of literature and culture from different periods and geographical areas. Discuss different generic and stylistic features of a range of literary and cultural forms, as well as aspects of their historical development. Discuss the intersections between literature and culture and other disciplines.	Reflect critically and comparatively on the similarities and differences between literature and culture from different periods and geographical areas. Assess and analyse different generic and stylistic features of a wide range of literary and cultural forms, and their historical development. Assess and analyse the interfaces between literature and culture and other disciplines.
K2	<p>Knowledge and understanding of theoretical and critical approaches to comparative literary and cultural analysis, and key critical issues surrounding comparative practice.</p> <p>Understand major debates about theories and practices of comparative literature in a transnational context.</p>	Develop knowledge and understanding of appropriate critical terminology for the analysis of a variety of expressive forms, especially those that underpin the study of literary, visual, and multimedia texts.	Recall key information about theoretical and critical approaches to comparative literary and cultural analysis. Recognise some of the major debates about theories and practices of comparative literature in a transnational context.	Identify theoretical and critical approaches to comparative literary and cultural analysis. Discuss some of the major debates about theories and practices of comparative literature in a transnational context.	Critically and comparatively evaluate theoretical and critical approaches to comparative literary and cultural analysis. Assess and analyse major debates about theories and practices of comparative literature in a transnational context with sophistication.

K3	<p>Knowledge and understanding of the cultural and socio-historical, linguistic, intellectual, and institutional contexts in which literature and cultural products are produced and the relations between these contexts and others.</p> <p>Understanding of the role of literature and other cultural products as carriers of meaning and value with specific cultural and ideological functions.</p>	Develop foundational knowledge and understanding of the contexts in which culture is produced and consumed, and of the relationship between a range of expressive forms to other disciplines and forms of knowledge.	Recall key information about the socio-historical, intellectual, cultural, and institutional contexts in which literature and cultural products are produced and consumed. Recognise some of the roles that literature and culture play in societies in different periods and geographical areas.	Identify the cultural and socio-historical, intellectual, cultural, and institutional contexts in which literature and cultural products are produced and consumed. Discuss some of the cultural and ideological functions played by literature and culture in different periods and geographical areas	Critically evaluate the relationships between literature and cultural products and the contexts in which they are produced and consumed. Analyse and assess how literature and culture function as carriers of meaning, value and ideology in different periods and geographical areas.
S1	<p>Command of the techniques of comparative analysis; and appropriate critical and theoretical techniques and terminology.</p> <p>Produce close textual and visual analyses and critical interpretations of literature and cultural products informed by knowledge of genres, styles, forms, materials, techniques of production, and contexts.</p>	Develop foundational critical skills in close reading, and in the analysis and critical interpretation of texts, images, data, and new media.	<p>Recognise key critical and theoretical techniques and terminology used in the analysis of literature and culture.</p> <p>Observe and describe some of the genres, styles, forms, materials, and techniques used in the production of literature and cultural products.</p>	Examine and compare some of the genres, styles, forms, materials, and techniques used in the production of literature and cultural products with appropriate critical and theoretical techniques and terminology.	Closely examine and critically interpret a range of genres, styles, forms, materials, and techniques used in the production of literature and cultural products with sophisticated application of critical and theoretical techniques and terminology
K	Engaged Humanities (JH) K6		Recall foundational knowledge of two or more subject areas and use core subject skills [with	Build wide-ranging subject learning and knowledge [with opportunity to consider	Select and apply specific debates/theories/conceptual frameworks within specialist

	Undertake multi-disciplinary [and/or interdisciplinary study] in two or more subject areas and engage with developing subject conversations and their currency in cultural discourse now.		opportunity to bring the fields of study into conversation].	interdisciplinary interrelations in theory, history or practice of the disciplines].	areas of the subject field and critically identify the potential for new ideas and subject directions [with an ability to critically understand and interrogate the intersections of interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary practice and engage with its capacity for generating unique meaning, knowledge, value].
S	Applied Humanities S1 Understand the relevance of subject skills to professional and applied contexts, and how to apply that knowledge in the future.	Establish and begin to practice a range of transferable subject skills in e.g. data and textual analysis, comparison, synthesis and summary, presentation.	Recognise and identify subject skills as transferable to work-based situations and competencies.	Generate outputs in a variety of formats which have application to work-based uses and/or particular audiences and/or functions.	Plan and manage an extended project/essay, using ADAPTIVE skills, INITIATIVE and SELF-MANAGEMENT to ensure successful task completion.
S	Global Humanities S2 Understand and enact intercultural awareness and competencies.	Engage in foundational discussions of the global and/or transnational contexts for culture.	Identify and respond to diverse cultural contexts and viewpoints	Understand and differentiate the circumstances and contexts that give rise to diverse viewpoints and world views.	Reflect on bias including one's own: operate within, appreciate, and evaluate different cultural context.
S	Critical S3	Establish foundational critical skills, including the ability to construct an evidence-based argument.	FOCUS in detail to FILTER, summarise and classify a range of information (issues, texts, contexts.)	Objectively evaluate information (issues, texts, contexts) demonstrating INTEGRITY and evidence-based reasoning.	Synthesise and evaluate information from disparate and potentially conflicting sources to reach INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT with the capacity to deconstruct the conditions pertaining to the construction of knowledge.

S	Collaborative S4	Engage in forms of collaborative and group-based activity, and establish foundational skills in co-operation and multi-tasking.	Reflect on current experience and identify the potential to ADAPT and modify in response to that experience.	Carry out collaborative activity with RESILIENCE and provide an individual contribution to a collective goal/task.	Co-work and/or co-create in partnership with others in achievement of collective goals and recognise acknowledge the importance of collaborative practice in knowledge production.
S	Communicative S5	Develop foundational confidence and communicative skills by expressing and defending views, and engaging in discussion.	Recall basic subject vocabulary and present information with FOCUS and ACCURACY.	Structure and organise the presentation of information in a variety of communicative modes with RELEVANCE, LOGIC and COHERENCE.	Design a presentation of information that can argue, influence or persuade, and/or can deploy a specialised vocabulary or creative/compositional technique.

Section 7 - Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning is mostly by means of lectures, structured seminars, and guided independent study. Assessment of knowledge and understanding is typically by formal examinations, coursework, oral presentations, exercises on Moodle, and by dissertations or long essays. Full details of the assessments for individual modules can be obtained from the Department's [website](#).

Contact hours come in various forms and may take the form of time spent with a member of staff in a lecture or seminar with other students. Contact hours may also be laboratory or, studio-based sessions, project supervision with a member of staff, or discussion through a virtual learning environment (VLE). These contact hours may be with a lecturer or teaching assistant, but they may also be with a technician, or specialist support staff.

The way in which each module on your degree course is assessed will also vary. Assessments designated as 'summative' will receive a mark which will count towards your overall mark for the module, and potentially your degree classification, depending on your year of study. On successful completion of the module you will gain the credits listed.

More detailed information on modules, including teaching and learning methods, and methods of assessment, can be found via the online [Module Catalogue](#). The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed regularly by the university, and may also be checked routinely by external agencies.

Section 8 – Additional costs
There are no single associated costs greater than £50 per item on this degree course.
These estimated costs relate to studying this particular degree course at Royal Holloway. General costs such as accommodation, food, books and other learning materials and printing etc., have not been included, but further information is available on our website.

Section 9 – Indicators of quality and standards	
QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	4-6
Your course is designed in accordance with the FHEQ to ensure your qualification is awarded on the basis of nationally established standards of achievement, for both outcomes and attainment. The qualification descriptors within the FHEQ set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of individual qualifications. The qualification descriptors contained in the FHEQ exemplify the outcomes and attributes expected of learning that results in the award of higher education qualifications. These outcomes represent the integration of various learning experiences resulting from designated and coherent courses of study.	
QAA Subject benchmark statement(s)	http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of courses in a specific subject or subject area. They also represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in terms of the attributes and capabilities that those possessing qualifications should have demonstrated.	

Section 10 – Intermediate exit awards (where available)		
You may be eligible for an intermediate exit award if you complete part of the course as detailed in this document. Any additional criteria (e.g. mandatory modules, credit requirements) for intermediate awards is outlined in the sections below.		
Award	Criteria	Awarding body
Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE)	Pass in 210 credits of which at least 90 must be at or above FHEQ Level 4 and at least 120 of which must be at or above FHEQ Level 5	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College

Certificate in Higher Education (CertHE)	Pass in 120 credits of which at least 90 must be at or above FHEQ Level 4	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College