Module code: MOD008678	Version: 1 Date Amended: 14/Dec/2021

1. Module Title

Worldbuilding 1 and 2

2a. Module Leader

Timothy Jarvis

2b. School

Cambridge School of the Creative Industries

2c. Faculty

Faculty of Arts, Humanities, Education and Social Sciences

3a. Level

6

3b. Module Type

Standard (fine graded)

4a. Credits

30

4b. Study Hours

300

5. Restrictions

Type	Module Code	Module Name	Condition
Pre-requisites:	None		
Co-requisites:	None		
Exclusions:	None		
Courses to which this module is restricted:	BA (Hons) Creative Writing, BA (Hons) Writing and English Literature, BA (Hons) Writing and Film		

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

6a. Module Description

In this module you will develop knowledge and skills necessary for the understanding and creation of fictional worlds, the basis for a range of creative writing, editing, teaching, and reviewing undertakings. The module will focus in one trimester on the creation of a fictional past through historical fiction, and in the other on the creation of wholly invented worlds through speculative fiction and explore the links between the two in terms of research, ethics, plausibility, consistency, imagination, and verisimilitude. You will delve into the similarities between the techniques, aims, audiences, and outcomes of historical fiction, often described as a 'realist' genre, and 'non-realist' speculative fiction.

Historical Fiction: in this segment of the module, you will study the skills and techniques needed to create successful historical fiction for a range of media (prose, tv, film, radio, games, etc.). You will be asked to consider the ethical issues which arise while trying to create a fictional 'historical past', beginning with a consideration of the adage that the present reinterprets history for its own purposes, and consider the degree to which depiction via the novel, film, games, and other comparatively recent platforms is in itself an intervention in the past. You will experiment with different techniques for conjuring the past with reference to setting, voice, and character as well as food, manners and mores. You will be asked to consider the needs of different audiences and different platforms, such as the demands of a staged play or the differences between the scope of a short story and a novel. Further, you will explore crossover historical fiction and how its conventions can work together with those of genres such as crime and fantasy. You will be expected to engage in primary and secondary research for your work and to reflect on how you incorporate such research into your writing.

Speculative fiction: in this segment of the module, you will be introduced to the craft of writing speculative fiction, focusing on fantasy, science fiction, and horror. You will explore what it means to write within a genre, whether the lines between genres are clear cut or blurred, and reflect upon what this means specifically for the writer of speculative fiction. You will be introduced to the specific skills needed by a writer of speculative fiction: such as how to build convincing worlds; how to invent convincing histories, literatures, and societies; how to avoid cliché in the writing and creation of unreal places; and how writers of speculative fiction map, explore, populate, and imagine fully their unreal worlds.

6b. Outline Content

HISTORICAL FICTION:
* Traditions of historical fiction and its uses in personal and national narrative.
* Place, Voice, Character, Food, Sound, Dress Manners and Mores.
* Audiences, Platforms and their needs (short stories, novels, drama, film, television, games, comics, and other platforms).
* Research techniques.
* Crossover historical fiction (e.g. historical crime, romance, fantasy, etc.)

SPECULATIVE FICTION:
* Defining speculative fiction: Fantasy, science fiction and everything in between.
* The boundaries between genres.
* Genre conventions.
* The specific tools of the writer of speculative fiction.
* Learning from other genres.
* Working with invented places and invented histories.
* The props, machinery, apparatus, and stock characters of speculative fiction.

6c. Key Texts/Literature

The reading list to support this module is available at: https://readinglists.aru.ac.uk/

6d. Specialist Learning Resources
None

7. Learning Outcomes (threshold standards)		
No.	**Type**	**On successful completion of this module the student will be expected to be able to:**
1	Knowledge and Understanding	Demonstrate a critical understanding of traditions and genre conventions of historical fiction and speculative fiction
2	Knowledge and Understanding	Demonstrate an awareness of the techniques of worldbuilding and the critical issues that arise when creating a fictional past and a speculative reality
3	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Research, plan, and write historical and speculative fiction
4	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Reflect critically upon work produced in the course of the module, evaluating skills, knowledge, and creative development

8a. Module Occurrence to which this MDF Refers				
Year	**Occurrence**	**Period**	**Location**	**Mode of Delivery**
2025/6	ZZF	Template For Face To Face Learning Delivery		Face to Face

8b. Learning Activities for the above Module Occurrence			
Learning Activities	**Hours**	**Learning Outcomes**	**Details of Duration, frequency and other comments**
Lectures	0	None	None
Other teacher managed learning	48	1-4	2-hour seminar/workshop per week.
Student managed learning	252	1-4	Weekly work reading, researching, selecting, editing, reflecting, developing, and writing.
TOTAL:	300		

9. Assessment for the above Module Occurrence					
Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
010	Coursework	1-4	50 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)

3,000-word coursework, including portfolio of fiction (approx. 2,000 words) and critical reflection (approx. 1,000 words)

Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
011	Coursework	1-4	50 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)

3,000-word coursework, including creative portfolio (approx. 2,000 words) and critical reflection (approx. 1,000 words)

In order to pass this module, students are required to achieve an overall mark of 40% (for modules at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6) or 50% (for modules at level 7*).

In addition, students are required to:
(a) achieve the qualifying mark for each element of fine graded assessment as specified above
(b) pass any pass/fail elements

[* the pass mark of 50% applies for all module occurrences from the academic year 2024/25 – see Section 3a of this MDF to check the level of the module and Section 8a of this MDF to check the academic year]