

Creative Writing – Online Modular Course

The course consists of 7 modules. Costs are £300 for all seven when paid in advance, or £50 if purchased individually.

Each module contains background reading, practical exercises and homework. You will receive written feedback on all homework within 10 days of completing the module.

It is recommended that you aim at completing one module every 4 to 6 weeks, but this is entirely up to you. The most important thing is to work at a pace you are comfortable with that allows you to get the most out of the course.

A brief guide to the content of each module follows.

Module 1 – Ideas and stories

Where to find inspiration for initial ideas.

Practical exercises to get you using your imagination to make new stories from things you see or read.

The difference between an idea and a story, and the dangers of trying to make a script out of an idea alone.

How to start to turn the idea into a story.

Module 2 – Beginnings and beyond.

How to test if you have a story that will work.

The importance of the opening page or first scene.

What makes a good opener.

Writing your opening.

Module 3 – Characters.

Characters and characterisation - What is the difference between the two?

How do you build a believable character?

How will the medium or type of story affect how much you need to build your character?

The balancing act between creating recognisable characters and avoiding stereotypes.

Idiolect – it ain't what you say, it's the way that you say it.

Module 4 – Dialogue

Writing convincing dialogue.

What is natural dialogue, what is unnatural dialogue?

Using dialogue to move your story forward.

Getting the back story across and avoiding exposition.

From the verbal to the visual – Ways to give non-verbal information

Module 5 – Conflict and Action

How big or small should a conflict be?

The difference between something happening and something changing.

The balance of power and changes to it.

Dialogue as action - Open and closed statements, position changes, provocations, responses and resolutions.

Testing whether scenes or chapters move the story forward.

Module 6 – Setting

What does a setting consist of? It isn't just a place.

Researching your setting, and bringing it to life.

Setting as a character

Interaction of characters with their settings.

Module 7 – Plots, sub-plots and stories

What is the difference between a plot and a story?

Writing your story and writing your plot.

An explanation of Beats, Scenes and Sequences in writing.

Breaking a story down into its component parts.

When is a sub-plot appropriate? What are the risks of sub-plots?

How to check whether a character has a right to be in the story.