



THE UNIVERSITY
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MSc Comparative Literature

School of Literatures, Languages and
Cultures

Dr Frauke Matthes | 13 November 2024

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Session Overview

- Introduction to MSc Comparative Literature in School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures
- Programme structure
- Teaching and assessment
- Student life, community, and activities
- Support services
- Careers



Welcome to LLC

Literatures, Languages and Cultures

Programme Directors 2024-25

- Dr Frauke Matthes (semester 1)
- Dr Sourit Bhattacharya (semester 2)



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Departments and Subject Areas

- Asian Studies
- Celtic and Scottish Studies (CSS)
- English Literature
- European Languages and Cultures (DELC), incl. Intermediality
- Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies (IMES)
- Graduate School
 - Film Studies
 - Film, Exhibition and Curation
 - Translation Studies



MSc Comparative Literature

Comparative Literature is a School programme

- world-class teaching and research expertise across Departments, i.e. across literatures, languages and cultures, from Scotland to Asia, Scandinavia to the Middle East
 - We offer one of the widest variety of languages of any UK university.
- explore a range of literary works from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds
- critical, analytical and methodological skills
- international community of learners – comparative literature in the classroom



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The Programme

- exploration of a range of literary works and approaches from different linguistic and cultural systems and across literary periods
- interdisciplinary and intermedial: literature, film, art, music
- core courses introduce you to, and deepen your knowledge of, theories and methods in literary study
- option courses: focus on literary themes, genres, and historical periods, regions, critical theory, and the relationship of the written word to other arts, such as music, painting and film
- training in research skills, methods and problems
- independent study
- final dissertation: your own research interests; application of research skills

And...

- Resources: Edinburgh University Library, National Library of Scotland, Scottish Poetry Library, ...
- Edinburgh's culture: first UNESCO World City of Literature, festivals, theatres, museums, galleries and collections, ...



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Programme structure: coursework (full time)

Semester 1

- Core course: Theories and Methods of Literary Study I
- Research Skills and Methods
- Option course

Semester 2:

- Core course: Theories and Methods of Literary Study II
- Research Methods and Problems
- Option course

Option courses may include:

- World Literature
- Literature and Photography in the 20th Century
- The Great Russian Novel
- Reading Latin American Poetry
- Global Shakespeare across Media: Performance, Cinema, Digital Cultures
- ...



Programme structure:

Theories and Methods of Literary Study I (core course)

Theories and Methods of Literary Study I and II

- comparative practice and context of Comparative Literature
- literary theories as tools to 'do' comparative practice

Current topics (sem 1):

- What Is Comparative Literature?
- Tools for Comparison I: Text, Narrative, and Formal Criticism
- Tools for Comparison II: Globalisation and World Literature
- Tools for Comparison III: Translation, Minorisation, and Literary Circulation
- Tools for Comparison IV: Translation and Cultural Difference
- Comparison and Intermediality I: Literary Translingualism
- Comparison and Intermediality II: Screen Adaptation
- Reading Texts I: Carnavalesque
- Reading Texts II: Difference



Programme structure:

Theories and Methods of Literary Study II (core course)

Current topics (sem 2):

- Ecocriticism and Environmental Humanities
- Psychoanalysis, Literature, and the Medical Humanities
- 'Global' Reception of 'Euro-American' Texts: America/Europe in the Middle East
- Adapting from 'Global' Sources: Europe in China
- Indigenous Media and the Diaspora
- Global Feminisms
- Queer and Transgender Studies
- Postcolonial Criticism I: Orientalism and Comparative Literature
- Postcolonial Criticism II: Nation and Ethnic Minority Studies
- Comparison and AI: New (Digital) Landscapes for the Field

Plus: essay preparation (both semesters)



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Programme Structure: Research Skills courses

- Semester 1: **Research Skills and Methods**

- 5 units (online) with online Q&A session with course organiser (recorded)
- Critical response and annotated bibliography

- Semester 2: **Research Methods and Problems**

- Dissertation preparation
 - In-person lectures on defining research topic in literary studies and case studies in research development
 - In-person peer-review dissertation workshops
- Dissertation proposal, incl. annotated bibliography



Programme structure: dissertation

- April - early August
- 15,000 words
- own research interests (from idea/topic via proposal to dissertation)
- independent study
- supervisor



Programme structure: part time

Year 1

- Semester 1:
 - core course: Theories and Methods of Literary Study I
 - Research Skills and Methods
- Semester 2:
 - Core course: Theories and Methods of Literary Study II
 - Research Methods and Problems

Year 2

- Semester 1:
 - Option course
- Semester 2:
 - Option course
- April to early August: dissertation



How will you be taught?

Classes and contact hours

Core courses 'Theories and Methods of Literary Study I and II' (2.5 contact hours per week):

- Lecture (50 mins): staff lecture on their specialist topic
- Seminar (1.5h): student-centred and interactive
- Autonomous Learning Groups (outside class)

Option courses (2 contact hours per week):

- Typically: seminar (2h): student-centred and interactive
- Sometimes: Autonomous Learning Groups

Research Skills and Methods (sem 1)

- 5 units (2-5 short online lectures) and 1 online Q&A session per unit (1 hour, also recorded)

Research Methods and Problems (sem 2)

- 3 lectures (50-90 mins)
- 1 peer-review dissertation workshop (2h)



How will you be taught?

Independent study

Independent study:

- Course material (sem 1 and 2): reading; preparing questions; discussing material in Autonomous Learning Groups; preparing short presentations
- Dissertation preparation (sem 2): topic; research; proposal

Assignments and dissertation:

- Assessment (e.g. essays): reading, research, thinking, and writing; seek and respond to feedback
- Dissertation (April-August): supervision sessions (May, June, July) – submit material and be open to feedback

LEARN platform:

- Resource list (Library) for essential, recommended and further reading (course reading)
- Content folders (often arranged weekly)
- Further information
- Announcements

Make use of our facilities, e.g. Main Library, study room, ...



How will you be assessed?

Core course assessment for both semesters:

- essay plan due in week 8 (sem 1) and week 7 (sem 2) – not assessed
- 4000 word essay due in week 13 (after end of teaching)

Option courses:

- Various, but typically essays (4000 words or 1000 words + 3000 words)

Research Skills and Methods (sem 1):

- 500 word critical response due in week 5
- 2000 word annotated bibliography due in week 8

Research Methods and Problems (sem 2):

- decide on dissertation topic (week 3)
- 1000-word dissertation proposal due in week 8

Dissertation: 15,000 words (early August) – supervisor; own interest



What will you learn?

- a thorough understanding of Comparative Literature, as a subject and as a practice
- knowledge of a number of literary theories and different approaches to literary study, and the ability to use them for literary analysis
- the ability to focus in detail on literary themes, genres and historical periods from a comparative perspective
- transferable skills such as critical thinking, analytical and interpretative ability, communication and writing skills (different career paths)



Places to Study

- There are dedicated Masters study room in **50 George Square** (with open access desks and lockers – no assigned desks).
- Main Library and many other university libraries
- Scottish National Library
- [Study Space at Edinburgh](#)



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Student Life

- Information and communication
 - Internal sharepoint site for all students with information
 - Announcements via LEARN platform
 - Weekly LLC Postgrad Life newsletter (by LLC comms intern)
- Welcome week events (inductions and introductions)
 - School welcome events, incl. meet your Programme Director
 - Library induction
 - Introduction by other services
- Student representatives
- Student Experience Fund (dedicated fund to support academic activities by students for students)



Student community and activities

- **Student Support Service and LLC SAS**
[LLC Student Support](#)
- **Cohort events:** welcome event; one per semester (cultural and/or skill building); and dissertation symposium
- department/programme-based **research seminars** and other events
- **student-led events**
- **EUSA: join a society:** [EUSA societies](#)



Ask a Postgraduate Student

Wednesday, 13 November, at 5pm

register by accessing your e-ticket from your confirmation email, scrolling to the bottom and going to 'register for more sessions'; from there, search for the name of the session and book your place

You'll hear from:

- Beth, a British PhD student in Chinese Studies and former MSc student
- Kate, an American MSc student studying Literature and Modernity



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Support Services (1)

- **Health and Wellbeing**
 - [Health and wellbeing](#)
- **Counselling and Mental Health Support:** advice and support on negotiating challenging circumstances
 - [Student Counselling](#)
- **Disability and Learning Support Service:** not only for physical disabilities, but also support students having learning conditions (e.g. dyslexia) or chronic mental health conditions (e.g. anxiety/depression)
 - [Disability and Learning Support Service](#)



Support Services (2)

- **Institute for Academic Development (IAD):** wide range of advice/workshops on research and teaching skills
 - [Institute for Academic Development](#)
- **ELSIS** (English Language Support for International Students):
 - [ELSIS](#)
- **Careers Service**
 - [Careers Service](#)
- **The Advice Place (run by Edinburgh University Students Association - EUSA):** handles queries/problems relating to a wide range of problems (financial, health, private accommodation etc.)
 - [EUSA](#)



Careers

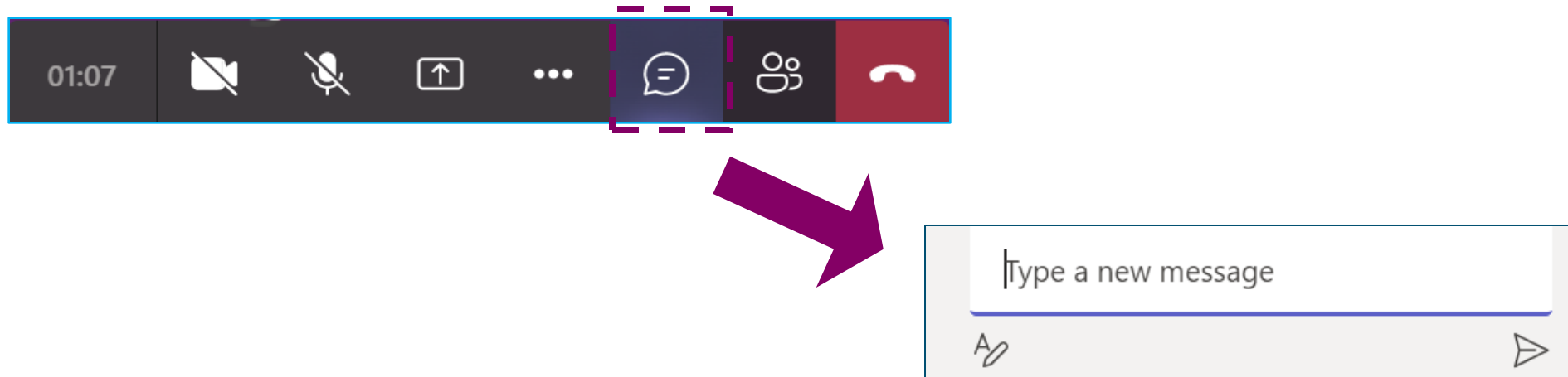
Career paths may include:

- Doctoral research (PhD)
- Arts industry
- Cultural heritage
- Publishing
- Journalism
- Teaching
- ...



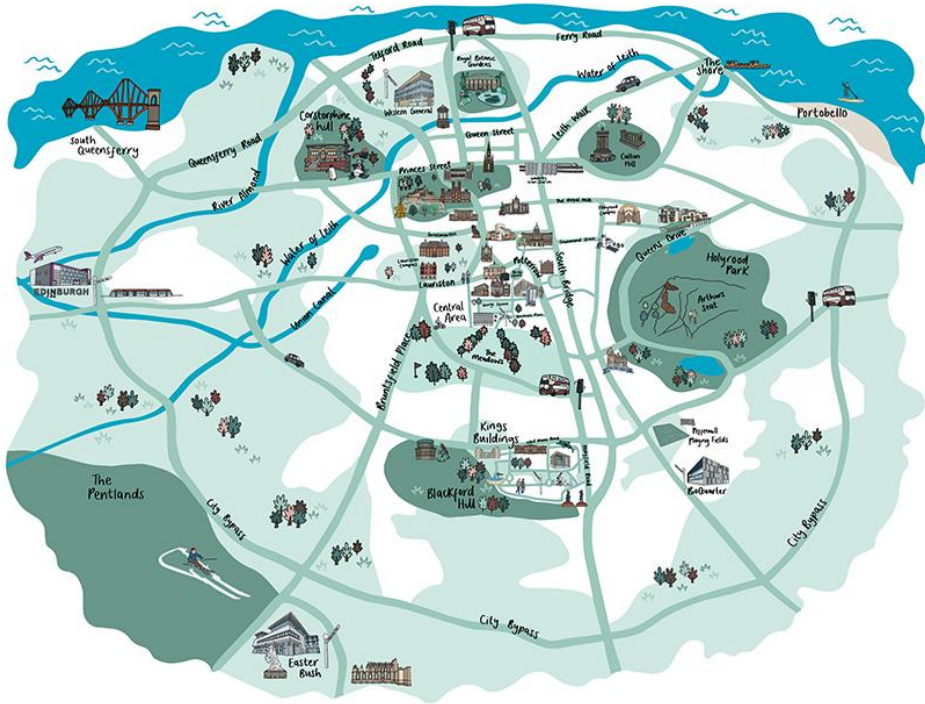
Asking questions (Microsoft Teams)

- Type your question into the Chat Area



Next steps...

<https://virtualvisits.ed.ac.uk/pg>



<https://edin.ac/student-chat-pg>



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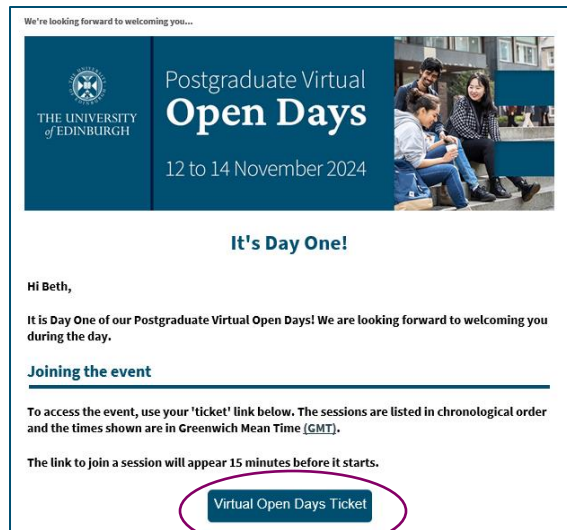
Contact details for follow-up questions

- We apologise if we did not get through all of your questions in the time allotted for this session. If you have further questions that have not been answered, please email: futurestudents@ed.ac.uk
- You can also ask questions in an online CAHSS Admissions chat: <https://cahss.ed.ac.uk/about-us/staff-contacts/college-office>

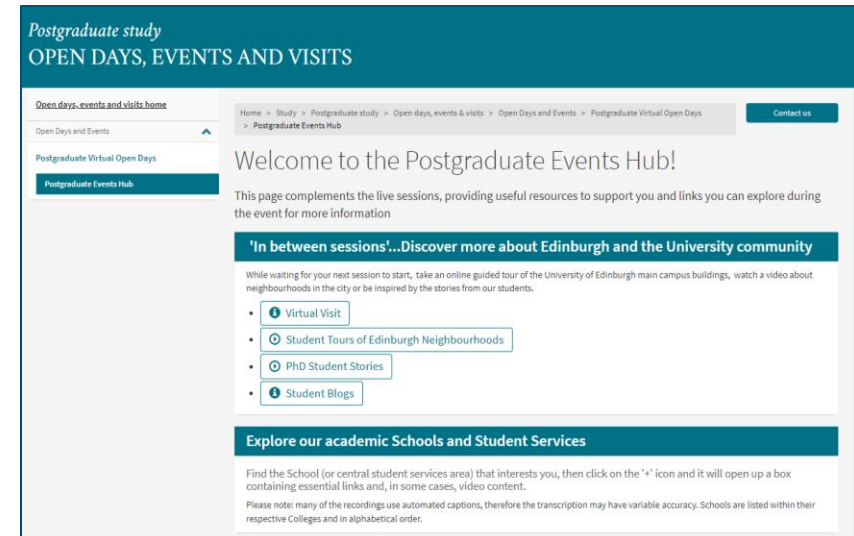


Thank you – click ‘Leave’ when the session ends

- Return to your ‘e-ticket’ to find and attend other sessions you’ve booked – by clicking on the button in the email we sent you...



- ...and visit the events hub:
- <https://edin.ac/4gZuP3G>



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Thank you

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