

Certificate in Historical Fiction Writing

Programme Specification and Unit Descriptors

Awarded by West Dean
1 years, part-time



Programme Specification

This Certificate in Historical Fiction Writing is awarded in recognition of the successful completion of all three weekend course units spread across each academic term, self-directed study and the completion of the first 5,000 words of a historical fiction novel.

The course seeks to bring together all the key components of good historical fiction writing into one continuing programme and to offer an insight into the writer's toolkit, necessary for developing skills and building your confidence.

The course is aimed at writers who wish to commit to an extended programme of study without having to make a significant time commitment, and who will benefit from a cohesive course that offers focus on the key elements of successful historical fiction writing over the course of an academic year.

Aims

- To introduce you to the key skills and knowledge that underpin successful historical fiction writing, including the organisational skills required for historical research, plotting and structuring, world building, character development and narrative technique
- To introduce you to constructive and focused critical reflection of your work
- To provide a stimulating and varied learning environment to enable you to develop your skills around voice, style, point of view, pacing and prose
- To offer a series of writing exercises, along with discussion, textual analysis and a review of the 'golden rules of historical fiction writing' to support you to develop your craft
- To support the development of drafting, editing and rewriting skills
- To develop the use of dialogue, crafting scenes, adding suspense and effective pacing
- To examine how much historical detail/background to include
- To offer insight into the traditions, theory and responsibilities of the historical fiction writer
- To enable you to make clear authorial and editorial choices about your developing work



Unit Descriptors

This Certificate in Historical Fiction Writing course is designed for writers who want an extended and cohesive course on historical fiction writing. It offers a deeper and broader range of teaching, designed to enable you to take on a piece of longer fiction. At the end of the third unit, you will be asked to submit the first 5,000 words of a work in progress for marking and feedback by the tutor.

Unit 1: Research, Structure & Plotting

- An introduction to historical fiction
- The rules of historical fiction
- Historical research
- Structure: Creating a solid foundation
- The five key elements of plotting

Unit 2: Characters & Place

- Creating memorable characters
- Understanding and experimenting with point of view
- Crafting effective dialogue
- Understanding the environment
- World-building

Unit 3: Writing Your Book

- Using suspense to create drama
- Pacing - keeping your reader engaged
- Scene structure
- Revising and refining - editing and rewriting

Final writing

On completion of the final unit, you will submit the first 5,000 words of a piece of historical fiction that you have developed on the programme.

Completion

On successful completion, you will receive a Certificate of Completion and be offered an interview for the MA in Creative Writing and Publishing, should you wish to continue your studies and project. The MA is set up to facilitate the production of a completed novel.

Please see the [website](#) for details on entry requirements, fees and how to apply.