



Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - 2024-2025

Exchange

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers many English-taught courses in a variety of subjects, ranging from arts & culture and social sciences, neurosciences and computer science, to economics and business administration.

The International Office is responsible for course approval and course registration for exchange students. For details about course registration, requirements, credits, semesters and so on, please [visit the exchange programmes webpages](#).

British Literature 1900-present

Course Code	L_ELBALES217
Credits	6
Period	P5+6
Course Level	200
Language Of Tuition	English
Faculty	Faculty of Humanities
Course Coordinator	dr. R.V.J. van den Oever
Examiner	dr. R.V.J. van den Oever
Teaching Staff	dr. R.V.J. van den Oever
Teaching method(s)	Practical, Seminar

Course Objective

Students become acquainted with the main developments and a number of key texts in British literature from 1900 to the present, with a focus on how fiction, through styles and themes, reflects its historical context.

By the end of the course, students can:

- Closely read the selected literary texts.
- Explain the concepts and arguments put forward in the selected secondary literature.
- Do all this in clear and concise written English.

Course Content

Central to this course is the question: How has British literature responded to social changes from 1900 to the present? We examine relevant literary developments, including realism, modernism, postcolonialism, and postmodernism, against their respective historical backdrops.

Topics and literary texts discussed in previous years include:

- The move from realism to modernism in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925).
- The nostalgic return to realism and the estate genre in Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* (1945).
- The postcolonial reimagining of British identity in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966).
- The representation of a multicultural society in Hanif Kureishi's *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985) (both screenplay and film).
- The postmodern revision of British literature in Ian McEwan's *Atonement* (2001).

Both topics and literary texts are subject to change.

Additional Information Teaching Methods

- We meet once a week for four hours.
- Attendance is mandatory.
- Meetings are held on campus; no hybrid alternative is offered.
- Each meeting consists of group discussions, exam instruction/practice, and a lecture portion.
- Prior to each meeting, students complete a Canvas assignment.
- Devices with access to social media (this includes laptops) are not allowed in class. If an exception needs to be made for medical reasons, students must contact the academic advisor prior to the start of the course.

- There will be no meetings in period 6.

Method of Assessment

- Successful completion of the course is contingent on timely submission of all Canvas assignments and attendance at all meetings.

- The full final grade for the course is based on a take-home exam consisting of short essay questions. The take-home exam will be held over three days in week 9 of period 5 (the week of 26 May 2025). **English writing proficiency is a key aspect of the assessment.**

Entry Requirements

Students must have passed the course Literary Theory (L_ELBALES101). No exceptions will be made.

Literature

To be announced in the course syllabus, which will be posted on Canvas well in advance of the start of the course.

Additional Information Target Audience

This course is part of the Bachelor's program Literature and Society, track English.