



Cultural Criticism Students' Handbook Year One 08-09

This handbook explains how and when
Cultural Criticism is taught and assessed,
and when you get your results.

Do not lose it!

Weekly Cultural Criticism Lectures:

Tuesday 2.10-3.00pm, room 0.22, Law Building

Thursday 1.10-2.00pm, room 1.05, Tower Building

Weekly Cultural Criticism Seminar:

Tutor.....

Day and time.....

Room.....Humanities Building

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Foreword

Welcome to 'ENCAP'. With its unique mix of disciplines, the School offers an exciting range of specialised and innovative undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and a dynamic and highly successful research culture. As one of the largest Schools in the University, with approximately a thousand students (one hundred of them postgraduates), and over fifty academic staff, we pride ourselves on the quality of experience we offer our students.

The School is fully committed to the University's mission of providing research-led learning and teaching of the highest quality. As part of our policy of continual enhancement, all sections in the School include common statements on policy documents in their handbooks. The statements cover:

- About the Cardiff School of English, Communication and Philosophy
- Contacting Staff via Email
- Degree Classification and Exam Board Conventions
- Dignity at Work and Study
- Disability and Specific Learning Needs
- Electronic Detection of Plagiarism
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- Extenuating Circumstances Form
- Personal Development Planning
- Personal Tutoring

These are key topics in which we all have an interest as members of an academic community devoted to excellence and the highest standards of professional behaviour. Many are concerned with practical ways in which we can communicate effectively and clearly with each other and thereby promote the well-being and success of our community and of the University more generally.

There are several ways in which you as a student can contribute to the community, but especially by joining the Student-Staff panels associated with the Board of Studies that runs your degree, and through mutual respect in all your dealings with staff and with each other.

There is something special about Humanities subjects, and especially those which are taught and researched in ENCAP. They provide us with ways of understanding and questioning the world in which we live and the culture we construct out of the language we use and value.

I hope you both enjoy and profit from your time in the School.

Professor Martin A. Kayman FRSA FEA
Head of the Cardiff School of English, Communication and Philosophy

Introduction

Welcome to Cultural Criticism.

This handbook contains important information that you will need during the academic year. This includes information on the submission of assessed work, marking criteria, examination procedures and general Cardiff University regulations, as well as information on guidance and services available to students.

We have included a timetable and details of first year modules. Additional information regarding events related to the course which may be of interest will be available throughout the year from course tutors. We hope that you will find your time at Cardiff both stimulating and rewarding.

One particular area that we must emphasise is the section on plagiarism. You should be aware that the School and the University as a whole take unfair practice very seriously indeed. During the autumn semester, we will explain how to reference your work properly so as to avoid problems of plagiarism.

Your personal tutor will be happy to support you in your work and to provide you with opportunities for consultation and discussion about Cultural Criticism in general—feel free also to approach any member of the Cultural Criticism staff. We all hold office hours for this purpose.

We wish you an enjoyable and stimulating year.

Dr Carl Plasa

On behalf of the Board of Studies for Cultural Criticism

Cultural Criticism 2008-2009: Key Dates

Autumn Semester: 22 Sept 08 – 23 Jan 09

Week Commencing

22-Sept-08	Enrolment week
29-Sept-08	First week of lectures and seminars
06-Oct-08	Lectures and seminars
13-Oct-08	Lectures and seminars
20-Oct-08	Lectures and seminars
27-Oct-08	Lectures and seminars
03-Nov-08	Reading week (no lectures or seminars)
10-Nov-08	Lectures and seminars
	Essay questions available from 13 Nov 08
17-Nov-08	Lectures and seminars
24-Nov-08	Lectures and seminars
01-Dec-08	Lectures and seminars
08-Dec-08	Final week of lectures and seminars
15-Dec-08	Christmas vacation
22-Dec-08	Christmas vacation
29-Dec-08	Christmas vacation
05-Jan-09	Guided study week (no lectures or seminars)
12-23 Jan 09	Assessment period
	Essays due 15 Jan 09 noon

Note that teaching and assessment dates for your other subjects may be different.

Spring Semester: 26 Jan 09 – 26 June 09

Week commencing

26-Jan-09	First week of lectures and seminars
02-Feb-09	Lectures and seminars
09-Feb-09	Lectures and seminars
	Autumn essay results displayed 13 Feb 09
16-Feb-09	Lectures and seminars
23-Feb-09	Reading week (no lectures or seminars)
02-Mar-09	Lectures and seminars
09-Mar-09	Lectures and seminars
	Essay questions available from 12 Mar 09
16-Mar-09	Lectures and seminars
23-Mar-09	Lectures and seminars
30-Mar-09	Easter vacation
06-Apr-09	Easter vacation
14-Apr-09	Easter vacation
20-Apr-09	Lectures and seminars
27-Apr-09	Final week of lectures and seminars
04-May-09	Guided study week (no lectures or seminars)
	Pre-enrolment into Year Two 7 May 09
11 May-26 Jun 09	Assessment period
	Essays due 14 May 09 noon
	Spring essay results displayed 3 July 09

Note that teaching and assessment dates for your other subjects may be different.

Preparation

Specific reading is set for most weeks of the course; you will not be able to pass the course unless your assessed essays demonstrate understanding of these readings. There is also a screening of *Pulp Fiction* in the autumn semester.

In weekly seminars you will discuss the readings, lectures and screenings with a small group of students and the tutor. Please bring to each seminar:

- Lecture handouts
- Your lecture notes
- The week's reading
- Your notes on the week's reading and/or screening
- Your opinions on the week's topic

Seminars require active participation: be prepared to discuss what you found most interesting about the week's topic, and to ask questions about anything you found difficult to understand.

You will receive a handout in most lectures; if you miss a lecture, you can download the handout afterwards from the Cultural Criticism Blackboard area. Log into Blackboard at <http://cue.cf.ac.uk>.

It is important to visit Blackboard regularly, because we use it to make important announcements and to distribute additional electronic resources.

➤ Week-by-week readings and screenings are listed in the **Syllabus** below.

Set texts

You need to obtain three texts. Several others are optional.

In the autumn semester the set texts are:

The Postmodernity I Course Reader

Jeanette Winterson, *Written on the Body* (London:Vintage, 1993)

In the spring semester the set text is:

The Postmodernity II Course Reader

The two Course Readers contain the essential readings for each week of the course. They are available from only Blackwell's bookshop in the Student Union. The Readers go on sale in the first week of teaching in their respective semesters.

Written on the Body can be purchased from Blackwell's or any bookstore.

Optional readings

Each week there are also optional readings, listed in the Syllabus below. These are not simpler substitutes for the essential readings; rather, they provide useful critical and historical contexts for the ideas discussed in the course.

You are not expected to purchase the optional texts; they can be found in the Arts and Social Studies Library. If you are unsure how to find them, please ask at the Library Information Desk.

Further reading

If you wish to read further, we recommend Charles Jencks, *What is Postmodernism?*, 4th edn (London: Academy, 1996) to accompany Postmodernity I, and Nick Mansfield, *Subjectivity: Theories of the Self from Freud to Haraway* (New York: New York University Press, 2000) to accompany Postmodernity II. These usefully draw together the themes of each module, although please be mindful that they don't answer all the questions raised by the course.

For a wider selection of bite-size writings on postmodernity, we recommend two anthologies: Joseph Natoli and Linda Hutcheon (eds), *A Postmodern Reader* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1993) and Thomas Docherty (ed.), *Postmodernism: A Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

If you want something harder, two divergent views of postmodernity are presented in Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism; or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1991) and Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1984).

All the books mentioned here can be found in the Arts and Social Studies Library, next to the Humanities Building. You might also like to explore the books on modernity and postmodernity in section HM101 on the ground floor of the Arts and Social Studies Library. But please avoid the unreliable and reductive *Teach Yourself Postmodernism*.

Scholarly electronic resources will be available during the year via Blackboard. Please avoid Wikipedia, online class notes from other institutions, personal web sites and free online dictionaries; essays that refer to such sources will not reach university level.

Finally, keep in mind that it is possible to write excellent essays with reference to only the essential readings; although evidence of further reading is commendable, it is critical to demonstrate your understanding of the essential readings before analysing or discussing anything else.

Year One Syllabus

Autumn semester

SE3101 Postmodernity I

What is the postmodern? In this module you will analyse cultural objects in order to decide whether postmodernism is a particular moment, a matter of style, or even a state of mind. After introductory lectures on culture and criticism, the syllabus covers music, visual art, cinema, and literature; you will spend two weeks on each.

The learning outcomes are as follows. Upon completion of the module, you should be able to write essays demonstrating:

- Sound basic knowledge of the relationships between realism, modernism and postmodernism
- The ability to analyse the construction of meanings in visual, musical and textual cultural objects
- The ability to apply critical theories of culture to Western cultural practices

Week 1: w/c 29 Sept 08

Tues lecture: Culture

Thurs lecture: Criticism

Essential reading: Raymond Williams, 'Criticism' and 'Culture', *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London: Fontana, 1976), pp. 74-82

Optional reading: Marjorie Garber, 'Introduction: Clothes Make the Man', *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993), pp. 1-17

Week 2: w/c 06 Oct 08

Tues lecture: Postmodernity and Music I

Thurs lecture: Postmodernity and Music II

Essential reading: John Cage, 'Juilliard Lecture', *A Year From Monday: New Lectures and Writings* (London and New York: Marion Boyars, 1976), pp. 95-111

Optional listening: Steve Reich, *Different Trains* (Naive, 2004) [audio CD]

Week 3: w/c 13 Oct 08

Tues lecture: Postmodernity and Music III

Thurs lecture: Postmodernity and Music IV

Essential reading: Brian Longhurst, 'Texts and Meaning', *Popular Music and Society*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Polity, 2007), pp. 150-179

Optional listening: The Beatles, *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (Parlophone, 1992) and Massive Attack, *Blue Lines* (Wild Bunch, 1991) [audio CDs]

Week 4: w/c 20 Oct 08

Tues lecture: Postmodernity and Art: A Demand/Realism

Thurs lecture: Postmodernity and Art: The Sublime and the Avant-Garde

Essential reading: Jean-François Lyotard, 'Answer to the Question: What is the Postmodern?', *The Postmodern Explained to Children: Correspondence 1982-1985* (London: Turnaround, 1992), pp. 9-25

Optional reading: Alys Eve Weinbaum, 'Ways of Not Seeing: (En)Gendered Optics in Benjamin, Baudelaire, and Freud', in David L. Eng and David Kazanjian (eds), *Loss: The Politics of Mourning* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 396-426

Week 5: w/c 27 Oct 08

Tues lecture: Postmodernity and Art: The Postmodern I

Thurs lecture: Postmodernity and Art: The Postmodern II

Essential reading: William V. Dunning, 'The Concept of Self and Postmodern Painting: Constructing a Post-Cartesian Viewer', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 49:4 (1991), 331-336

Optional reading: Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', *Illuminations*, trans. by Harry Zohn (London, Fontana, 1992), pp. 211-244

Week 6: w/c 03 Nov 08

Reading week: No lectures or seminars in Cultural Criticism

Week 7: w/c 10 Nov 08

Tues lecture: Realist Cinema

Weds screening: *Pulp Fiction* (dir. Quentin Tarantino, 1994)
Wednesday 12 November 2008, 2:10-5pm
Room 1.05, Tower Building

Thurs lecture: Postmodern Cinema I

Essential reading: David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, 'The Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing', *Film Art: An Introduction* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), pp. 246-291

Optional reading: Manohla Dargis, 'Quentin Tarantino on *Pulp Fiction*', in *Quentin Tarantino: Interviews*, ed. by Gerald Peary (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1998), pp. 66-69

Week 8: w/c 17 Nov 08

Tues lecture: Postmodern Cinema II

Thurs lecture: Postmodern Cinema III

Essential reading: bell hooks, 'Cool Cynicism: *Pulp Fiction*', *Reel to Real: Race, Sex and Class at the Movies* (New York and London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 47-51

Optional reading: Fintan O'Toole, 'Bloody Minded', *Guardian* 3 February 1995: 16
[Accessible via Lexis Nexis in the Postmodernity I 'Links' area of Blackboard: <http://cue.cf.ac.uk>]

Week 9: w/c 24 Nov 08

Tues lecture: Textuality: Authorship I

Thurs lecture: Textuality: Authorship II

Essential reading: Jeanette Winterson, *Written on the Body* (London: Vintage, 1993)

Optional reading: Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', *Image - Music - Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), pp. 142-148

Week 10: w/c 01 Dec 08

Tues lecture: Textuality: The Body I

Thurs lecture: Textuality: The Body II

Essential reading: Franz Kafka, 'In the Penal Colony', *Metamorphosis and Other Stories*, trans. by Michael Hofmann (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2007), pp. 147-180

Optional reading: Nikki Sullivan, 'Fleshy (Dis)Figuration, or How to Make the Body Matter', *Critical Psychology* 5 (2002), 12-29

Week 11: w/c 08 Dec 08

Tues lecture: Essay Skills

Thurs lecture: Postmodernity I Summary

Essential reading: Modern Humanities Research Association, *MHRA Style Guide: A Handbook for Authors, Editors, and Writers of Theses*, 2nd edn (London: MHRA, 2008), pp. 42-66

Optional reading: Lynn Truss, *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation* (London: Profile, 2003)

Spring semester

SE3102 Postmodernity II

Building on the skills and knowledge developed in Postmodernity I, you will evaluate the difference that postmodernity makes to identity. Are identities natural or cultural? After introductory lectures on theories of identity, the syllabus covers nationality, race, the past, and trauma.

The learning outcomes are as follows. Upon completion of the module, you should be able to write essays demonstrating:

- The ability to apply skills and knowledge gained in Postmodernity I to Western identity politics
- The ability to analyse the cultural construction of social differences such as nationality, race, and ethnicity
- The ability to critique postmodern cultural values

Week 1: w/c 26 Jan 09

Tues lecture: Identity I

Thurs lecture: Identity II

Essential reading: K. Anthony Appiah, 'Identity, Authenticity, Survival: Multicultural Societies and Social Reproduction', in Charles Taylor et al., *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. by Amy Gutmann (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 149-163

Optional reading: Theodor W. Adorno, 'The Stars Down to Earth: The Los Angeles Times Astrology Column', *The Stars Down to Earth, and Other Essays on the Irrational in Culture* (London and New York: Routledge: 2002), pp. 46-171

Week 2: w/c 02 Feb 09

Tues lecture: Identity III

Thurs lecture: Identity IV

Essential reading: Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, 'The Story of "I": Illness and Narrative Identity', *Narrative* 10:1 (2002), 9-27

Optional reading: David B. Morris, 'Narrative, Ethics, and Pain: Thinking with Stories', *Narrative* 9:1 (2001), 55-77

Week 3: w/c 09 Feb 09

Tues lecture: Postmodernity and National Identity I

Thurs lecture: Postmodernity and National Identity II

Essential reading: Richard Kirkland, "‘In the Midst of All this Dross’: Establishing the Grounds of Dissent", *Literature and Culture in Northern Ireland since 1965: Moments of Danger* (London: Longman, 1996), pp. 19-24, 50

Optional reading: Zygmunt Bauman, 'The Agony of Tantalus', *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* (Cambridge: Polity, 2001), pp. 7-20

Week 4: w/c 16 Feb 09

Tues lecture: Postmodernity and National Identity III

Thurs lecture: Screening: *100% English* (dir. David Batty, 2006)

Essential reading: Colin Graham, "‘Maybe that’s just Blarney...’: Authenticity in Irish Culture", *Deconstructing Ireland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001), pp. 132-152

Optional reading: Julian Barnes, *England, England* (London: Picador, 1998)

Week 5: w/c 23 Feb 09

Reading week: No lectures or seminars in Cultural Criticism

Week 6: w/c 02 Mar 09

Tues lecture: Postmodernity and Race I

Thurs lecture: Postmodernity and Race II

Essential reading: bell hooks, 'Eating the Other', *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (London: Turnaround, 1992), pp. 21-41

Optional reading: Les Back, 'Wagner and Power Chords: Skinheadism, White Power, Music, and the Internet,' in Vron Ware and Les Back (ed.), *Out of Whiteness: Color, Politics, and Culture* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 9-132

Week 7: w/c 09 Mar 09

Tues lecture: Postmodernity and Race III

Thurs lecture: Screening: *Louis Theroux's Weird Weekends: South Africa*. Dir. Kate Townsend. BBC. 2000.

Essential reading: Richard Dyer, *White* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 1-40

Optional reading: Robert Young, 'Sex and Inequality: The Cultural Construction of Race', in *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 90-117

Week 8: w/c 16 Mar 09

Tues lecture: The Postmodern Question of the Past I

Thurs lecture: Screening: *Forgotten Silver* (dir. Peter Jackson and Costa Botes, 1995)

Essential reading: Leszek Kolakowski, 'Emperor Kennedy Legend: A New Anthropological Debate', *Salmagundi* 72 (Fall 1986), 211-217

Optional reading: Robert Darnton, 'Workers Revolt: The Great Cat Massacre of the Rue Saint-Séverin', in Tamsin Spargo (ed), *Reading the Past* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), pp. 26-43

Week 9: w/c 23 Mar 09

Tues lecture: The Postmodern Question of the Past II

Thurs lecture: The Postmodern Question of the Past III

Essential reading: Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'History and the Politics of Recognition' in Sue Morgan, Keith Jenkins, Alun Munslow (eds), *Manifestos for History* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 77-86

Optional reading: Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, 'Counterhistory and the Anecdote', *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), pp. 49-74

Easter vacation

Week 10: w/c 20 Apr 09

Tues lecture: Trauma I

Thurs lecture: Trauma II

Essential reading: Roger Luckhurst, 'Traumaculture', *New Formations* no. 50 (autumn 2003), 28-47

Optional reading: Mark Seltzer, 'Wound Culture: Trauma in the Pathological Public Sphere', *October* 80 (spring 1997), 3-26

Week 11: w/c 27 Apr 09

Tues lecture: Trauma III

Thurs lecture: Postmodernity II Summary

Essential reading: Dori Laub, 'Truth and Testimony: The Process and the Struggle', in Cathy Caruth (ed), *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), pp. 61-75

Optional reading: E. Ann Kaplan, *Trauma Culture: The Politics of Terror and Loss in Media and Literature* (New Brunswick, NJ, and London: Rutgers University Press, 2005), pp. 1-19

Assessment

Each Cultural Criticism module is assessed by **two essays**. So you will write four assessed essays for Cultural Criticism during Year One.

Because each assessed essay is marked by two people, you must submit **two identical copies of each essay**.

Full instructions on how to present essays will be provided with the assessed essay questions.

Distribution of essay questions

Assessed essay questions will be distributed via Blackboard.

The assessed essay questions will be available from:

Postmodernity I: Thursday 13 November 2008

Postmodernity II: Thursday 12 March 2009

On the above dates, a link to the questions will appear in the menu of the relevant module area within Blackboard (<http://cue.cf.ac.uk>). The questions and accompanying instructions can then be downloaded. To open them, you will need the free Adobe Reader (<http://tinyurl.com/6ip>).

Please do not wait until the essay distribution date to familiarise yourself with Blackboard; you should log on early in the autumn semester, check that the correct modules are accessible to you, learn how to navigate the site, and install the Adobe Reader on your computer.

Submission of essays

All assessed essays should be submitted in room 2.28, on the second floor of the Humanities Building, by 12 noon on the set date.

The deadlines for submission of essays are:

Postmodernity I: Thursday 15 January 2009 noon

Postmodernity II: Thursday 14 May 2009 noon

The submission deadlines are absolute. Failure to hand in assessed work by the specified deadline will result in the awarding of a mark of **zero** for that piece of work.

Essays cannot be submitted electronically; you will sign a register to confirm that essays have been submitted in person.

➤ See appendix 3 on **Extenuating Circumstances** to find out the only conditions under which students can be granted extensions.

Results

The Examining Board will meet shortly after the end of each semester. At the end of the autumn semester, the Board will issue students with **provisional** marks: this is because some marks may be adjusted at the end of the spring semester, to account for extenuating circumstances.

The essay results will be displayed on the notice board
outside the Cultural Criticism office on:

Postmodernity I: Friday 13 February 2009

Postmodernity II: Friday 3 July 2009

The results for the spring semester, together with the confirmed autumn marks, will also be posted during the summer to your permanent home address by the Registry (studentrecords@cardiff.ac.uk).

➤ If you do not want your results to appear on the notice board, see **Data Protection** in appendix 2.

Word limit

The word limit for each essay is 1,500 words. This limit:

- Includes all quotations
- Excludes all footnotes
- Excludes the bibliography
- Excludes the essay title
- Excludes subheadings
- Excludes appendices

You should write between 1,450 and 1,500 words; excessively long or short essays do not meet the 2.1 marking criteria of 'ability to select and organise material purposefully and cogently' and 'good, varied and economical expression'. There is no such thing as a '10 per cent rule' whereby an essay can exceed the word limit by 10 per cent. Work below the word limit will be marked according to its actual merit, not whatever potential the essay may appear to have. At the end of each essay, you must **write down the number of words** the essay contains.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of the ideas or words of others without acknowledging them as such. This applies to printed and online sources alike. It is an academic tradition that the ideas and words of another are not used without acknowledgement. Students must adhere to this tradition. The mark for written work in part indicates the student's understanding of the material of the essay. If he or she has merely repeated the words of another, it is difficult to assess the student's understanding, and so to award a mark.

It is therefore totally unacceptable for students to plagiarise in their written work. If they do so, their mark will be affected, and they will also have committed an unfair examination practice.

Cardiff University scans a selection of undergraduate coursework for evidence of plagiarism.

➤ For more information, see appendix 1 on **Electronic Detection of Plagiarism**.

Advice on essay writing

Essays should demonstrate that you have attained the relevant module learning outcomes stated in the Syllabus above. References in essays should be presented according to the *MHRA Style Guide* (included in both Course Readers). Further advice on writing Cultural Criticism essays will be given during the autumn semester.

Although staff are able to discuss brief bullet-pointed essay plans with you, we are not permitted to read and comment on drafts of assessed essays before they are submitted.

➤ See also the **Specimen Essay Questions** in appendix 4.

Feedback

Your feedback sheets, which will indicate why your essays received the marks they did, together with annotated copies of your essays, can be collected from the Cultural Criticism office from 23 February 2009 onwards (for autumn essays), and from 6 October 2009 onwards (for spring essays).

After looking through the feedback sheet and the returned copy of an essay, if you would like to discuss the essay's mark, please speak to the Year One Tutor, Dr Iain Morland.

Assessment criteria

Your essays will be assessed according to the following criteria. Essays should demonstrate:

Knowledge and understanding

- Range of reference to materials
- Depth of engagement with materials
- Relevance of materials

- Critical awareness
- Initiative and independence in searching out and using materials and resources
- Accuracy of recall and reference

Skills

- Capacity for critical analysis
- Conceptual and reflective skills
- Ability to use appropriate theoretical approaches where relevant
- Ability to initiate, structure and conduct a critical argument
- Ability to select and handle material
- Ability to articulate material of different kinds
- Accuracy, clarity and economy of presentation
- Competence in grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation
- Appropriate vocabulary and style
- Appropriate use of the formal conventions of academic exchange

Mark bands

Essays are marked out of 100, and are thereby divided into the following bands:

0% – 39%: Fail

40% – 49%: A bare pass, demonstrating:

Knowledge and understanding: evidence of some relevant knowledge of material

Skills: some ability to organise an argument and competence in handling of prose writing; elementary capacity for critical analysis

50% – 59%: A satisfactory pass, demonstrating:

Knowledge and understanding: some critical awareness, and a reasonable foundation of knowledge, particularly of required reading

Skills: ability to organise an argument; ability to select relevant material for the answering of a particular question; some capacity for critical analysis; competence in the handling of discursive prose with generally accurate grammar and syntax and appropriate vocabulary and style

60% – 69%: A good pass, demonstrating:

Knowledge and understanding: a solid foundation of knowledge and critical understanding of a wide and relevant range of material

Skills: ability to select and organise material purposefully and cogently; ability to handle complex ideas with clarity; evidence of independent and reflective thought; capacity for critical analysis; good, varied and economical expression; accurate grammar and syntax; good range and control of vocabulary and style; good presentation; basic use of the formal conventions of academic exchange

70%+:An excellent pass, demonstrating:

Knowledge and understanding: an ability to select and articulate diverse material, manifesting an original, perceptive and incisive critical understanding of relevant issues

Skills: an ability to contest and go beyond secondary material and received wisdom; sustained and cogent argument; good command of written English in all aspects, including stylistic flexibility

How the mark bands work

Each higher band subsumes the previous ones. This means that an essay with first class characteristics probably won't get a first class mark unless it meets the criteria for all the lower classes too.

For example an essay could exhibit a 'sustained and cogent argument' (which is a first class criterion) but fail to address the course readings: the essay would therefore not show 'a reasonable foundation of knowledge, particularly of required reading' (which is a lower second class criterion), so the mark would be lowered accordingly.

Frequently Asked Questions

Before you contact us, please check whether your question has already been answered here.

What should I do if I miss a class?

You must tell us. A record of seminar attendance is kept, and the Chair of the Board of Studies will be informed of any unexplained absence. If you are ill for more than three days, you should send a doctor's note to the Cultural Criticism secretary. Repeated failure to attend seminars will result in disciplinary action.

How do I change subjects?

It is only possible to change your Year One modules during the **first three weeks** of the autumn semester. Should you wish to change modules, please discuss this with your Personal Tutor. If you do change any of your modules, it is vital that you tell the Cultural Criticism secretary.

I have a timetable clash. Can I change seminar groups?

Yes. If your seminar clashes with another subject's timetable, speak to the Cultural Criticism secretary, who can allocate you a different seminar group.

I'd like to go home every Friday. Can I change seminar groups?

No.

What happens if I'm ill when writing essays?

If you have demonstrable health or personal problems that might affect your performance in assessed essays, you can request either special consideration during marking, or a deadline extension.

➤ See the **Extenuating Circumstances** information in appendix 3.

Can I submit essays late because of computer or printer problems?

No. Work submitted late because of IT problems will receive a mark of zero.

Can I submit essays early?

Yes. You can submit essays by Royal Mail Special Delivery to the address in the 'Contact Us' section above. Your essays must **arrive** on or before the deadline. You cannot submit early essays in person or by email.

Can I borrow the films screened during the course?

Yes. *Pulp Fiction*, *Louis Theroux's Weird Weekends: South Africa*, and *Forgotten Silver* may be borrowed from the Arts and Social Studies Library. The Cultural Criticism secretary also holds copies that can be viewed in the Humanities Building; if you choose this option, be sure to arrive early because the films need to be returned by 4pm. *100% English* is not in the Library, but can be viewed in the Humanities Building; please ask the Cultural Criticism secretary for this.

If you would like to view again any of the clips from other films, television programmes or music videos shown during lectures, search for them in the Library catalogue (<http://library.cf.ac.uk>) or ask the Cultural Criticism secretary: we try to stock everything that is screened.

Unfortunately, not all DVDs have subtitles. If this causes difficulties for you, contact the School's Academic Administrator for advice (room 2.63, Humanities Building; email: encap-ac@cf.ac.uk).

What is postmodernity?

We do not have a secret definition of postmodernity that we are concealing from you. There are several views on the meaning of postmodernity; you should decide between them—or decide that you can't decide, so long as you can defend your position. The assessed essays are an opportunity to explain and justify your opinion on postmodernity.

What's the difference between a cultural text and a theoretical text?

For our purposes in Cultural Criticism, a cultural text is any artefact that has meaning: for example, advertisements, artworks, buildings, journalism, movies, music, novels, photographs, postcards, short stories, statues, television programmes, and websites. The cultural texts studied in Cultural Criticism come from high culture, low culture, and everyday culture—we don't discriminate. Examples of cultural texts on the syllabus include *100% English*, *Different Trains*, 'In the Penal Colony', *Pulp Fiction* and *Written on the Body*.

Theoretical texts are written works that analyse culture; the Course Readers are comprised mostly of these. The theoretical texts studied in Cultural Criticism include articles from art theory, cultural studies and social theory, as well as other academic disciplines. Examples of theoretical texts on the syllabus include 'Juilliard Lecture', 'Answer to the Question: What is the Postmodern?', and 'The Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing'.

Personal Tutoring

Personal Tutors in the School of English, Communication and Philosophy act as a first source of advice and support for students on academic matters, and refer students to the appropriate services for assistance in relation to non-academic matters.

Who has a Personal Tutor?

All students enrolled on a degree in Cultural Criticism are allocated a Personal Tutor. Students undertaking joint honours degrees are allocated a Personal Tutor regardless of whether Cultural Criticism is their home department. However, students taking Cultural Criticism as a subsidiary subject (in other words, those who chose Cultural Criticism during enrolment week) do not have a Personal Tutor in Cultural Criticism.

Who is your Personal Tutor?

Your Personal Tutor is different from your Year One seminar tutor; you will have been told his/her name during enrolment. If you are uncertain as to who your Personal Tutor is, please ask the Cultural Criticism secretary.

What does a Personal Tutor do?

Your Personal Tutor has a responsibility to meet with you twice a year, either individually or in a small group with other tutees. There is a guided study week at the end of each semester for this purpose. Your Tutor will be happy to assist at key points in your academic career such as:

- In the early weeks of your course.
- If you wish to change modules.
- When you choose your programme of study for the following year.
- If you want a reference for a job or MA application, etc.
- To discuss your assessment results as a whole. (Queries about individual modules should be directed to the appropriate module convenor.)

Personal Tutors can provide advice and guidance in relation to content and structure of a proposed programme of study, including selection of module choices in Years 1, 2 and 3; academic progress; study skills development; assessment of work; and how to seek specialist help within the University in respect of special needs, careers guidance, financial, personal or health problems. We encourage you to report any absences from classes to your Personal Tutor, and to discuss the reasons for these and any necessary action.

All confidential dealings with Personal Tutors are respected.

What does a Personal Tutor not do?

Personal Tutors are not qualified to offer specialist counselling or guidance on financial, personal or health problems. These types of guidance are available within the University, and Personal Tutors will refer you to the appropriate source for specialist help as necessary.

Who else can give advice?

If you would prefer not to discuss a problem with your Personal Tutor, you can get advice within ENCAP from the Cultural Criticism Year One Tutor, Dr Iain Morland (room 2.18, Humanities Building), the Academic Administrator (room 2.63), or the Director of Teaching (room 2.45).

If you would prefer to discuss any problems with somebody outside ENCAP, contact the confidential Student Advisory Service:

Address: 50 Park Place, Cardiff

Telephone: 029 2087 4844

Email: studentadvisory@cf.ac.uk

Web: www.cf.ac.uk/advice

Is it possible to change Personal Tutors?

You will normally be allocated a single Personal Tutor for the whole of your undergraduate studies. However you are entitled to change your Personal Tutor at any time without giving a reason. This can be done simply by asking another member of the academic staff to become your Personal Tutor and informing the Cultural Criticism secretary of the change; there is no need for you to inform your original Personal Tutor.

If you change degree scheme, you will be allocated a new Personal Tutor by your new home department and/or new joint department.

Personal tutors who are on research leave will ensure that an appropriate notice directs their personal tutees to the relevant office for information about the interim arrangements.

Completing the Year

All first-year students at Cardiff University must **pass all of their modules in all subjects** in order to be able to proceed to Year 2.

Therefore, even if you do not intend to carry on with Cultural Criticism after Year 1 you must pass both Postmodernity I and II before you can start the second year of your degree. The mark for each module is the average of the marks awarded for the essays submitted for that module. The average must be 40 or above in order for a student to pass the module.

Each module in Year One of Cultural Criticism represents 20 credits. Full-time students must accumulate at least 120 credits during each academic year. When successfully passed, performance in a module does not affect the number of credits awarded: for example, Postmodernity I is worth 20 credits whether a student scores 40 or 100.

At the discretion of the relevant Examining Board, candidates who have been unsuccessful in any module may be permitted up to two subsequent attempts to redeem their failure in each such module. Such candidates, however, shall be eligible only for the award of the minimum pass mark in each such module, irrespective of their level of performance.

➤ See also the **Progression Regulations** in appendix 2.

Pre-Enrolling for Year Two

- Towards the end of the spring semester, all disciplines provide students with information about Year Two.
- On 7 May 2009, you will pre-enrol for Year Two. Full information about this process will be provided closer to the time.
- Should you change your mind about Year Two subjects or modules over the summer, you can amend your choices during autumn enrolment.

Studying Cultural Criticism in years two and three

If you are taking Year One Cultural Criticism as a third subject, it's easy to switch into the degree scheme during pre-enrolment on 7 May 2009. Enrolment is conditional on successfully completing the Year (see above).

Cultural Criticism is available as both **Single Honours** and **Joint Honours**:

- In Year Two, Cultural Criticism asks Joint Honours students to take one compulsory module (10 credits) and two optional (10 credit) modules per semester; Single Honours students take the compulsory module and a further 50 credits in optional modules per semester.
- In Year Three all modules are optional. Single Honours students are, however, required to write a dissertation. Single Honours students may also take up to 30 credits a year in free-standing modules offered by other disciplines.

You will be assessed on your modules by essays during each semester, rather than having exams at the end of the third year. You therefore accumulate your degree result as you go along.

Cultural Criticism in Years Two and Three is taught in mostly interactive seminar groups of around 6-30 students, rather than large lectures like Year One.

Why study Cultural Criticism in years two and three?

Here are some comments from current students and graduates:

- 'Studying a subject as broad as Cultural Criticism puts you at a huge advantage in job interviews because you can always find an aspect of the degree that suits the employer. Since graduating I have worked in the theatre, then as a screenwriting lecturer, and I currently work in the music industry for a music management company, following a placement at Warner Music. Indeed, it has been pleasurable to discuss my thoughts on Foucault with Radiohead, and the finer points of de Sade with the Scissor Sisters. Try tailoring Astrophysics to your suitability for a job looking after disgruntled bands. Cultural Criticism provides you with a broad understanding of our culture and society, and what could be more attractive to a potential employer than a deep understanding of why we live like we do?'

Fergus Cooper, BA (Hons) Cultural Criticism and English Literature

- 'I have thoroughly enjoyed my first two years studying Cultural Criticism at Cardiff University. The subject allows for in-depth and varied discussions on numerous exciting and often challenging topics. This year these have included the concepts of race and ethnicity, the notion of humanness, gender relationships, and even the ideologies behind film musicals. Although these subject matters may seem fairly unrelated, they provide an opportunity for the students and staff to interact, consider and analyse important social, political and cultural issues. Whether the discussion includes Descartes, *Singin' in the Rain* or Freud depends on the modules selected! I believe that Cultural Criticism forms an exciting part of my Joint Honours degree while also having a strong appeal to employers in its training of students to think widely.'

Ben Cajee, Year 2 Journalism, Media and Cultural Criticism

Recent Cultural Criticism graduates are now enjoying careers in, among other things: advertising, arts administration, charities, cultural policy, law, libraries, radio research, education (primary, secondary, further, and higher—Year One Tutor Iain Morland graduated in Cultural Criticism and English Literature), marketing, film and television, the music industry, public relations, journalism, the performing arts, publishing, and social work.

Contact Us

Before you contact us, please check whether your question has already been answered elsewhere in this handbook, especially if it concerns teaching or assessment dates, which are on pages 3–4.

For administrative queries

If you have a question about an administrative matter—for example a timetable clash involving Cultural Criticism seminars—contact the Cultural Criticism secretary, Ms Jean Verrier:

Office: room 2.21, second floor, Humanities Building

Email: culture@cf.ac.uk

Telephone: 029 2087 4822

The office is open from 8am–12pm and 1pm–4pm, Monday to Friday. It is closed between 12pm–1pm.

During holiday periods the office might occasionally be closed at other times. In such a case, you can leave a message with Academic Administrator Jill Burnett on 029 2087 6805.

For academic queries

If your query is academic—for example about the topic of a particular lecture—contact the relevant member of teaching staff.

We have regular office hours when we are available to see students. Times for all staff are listed outside the Cultural Criticism office. Please keep to these hours, or in exceptional circumstances speak to the Cultural Criticism secretary, who will be able to take a message.

If you have a general question about the Year One course, contact the Year Tutor, Dr Iain Morland (2.18, second floor, Humanities Building). In the event of course problems which cannot be dealt with by other staff, please contact the Chair of the Board of Studies, Dr Carl Plasa (2.13, second floor, Humanities Building).

Postal address

If you would like to write to us by post, the address is:

Cultural Criticism

Cardiff School of English, Communication and Philosophy

Humanities Building

Colum Drive

Cardiff

CF10 3EU

Email

The University has provided you with an email account. **You must regularly check your University email account, because all departments will use it to send you important information.**

The website to access your email is:
<http://mwe.cf.ac.uk>

Cultural Criticism staff are happy to answer queries by email, but you are likely **not** to receive a response if:

- You email from a non-University address. Spam filters block messages from many other accounts.
- You ask for information that is already in this handbook. It's here so that you don't have to wait for an email response.
- You send the same email to all of us at once. Everyone will assume that someone else has replied.

In the subject box please write: 'office hours for' and your name, e.g. 'office hours for John Smith'. This allows staff to sift through emails at a glance and not accidentally delete genuine e-mails.

Please keep emails reasonably formal, polite and moderate in language. Finally, note that we can't be expected to respond to emails outside normal working hours or on public holidays.

Staff email addresses

The email addresses of the staff who lecture in Year One Cultural Criticism are:

- Dr Neil Badmington badmington@cf.ac.uk
- Dr Claire Connolly connolly@cf.ac.uk
- Dr Iain Morland YearOneCC@cf.ac.uk
- Dr Irene Morra morrai@cf.ac.uk
- Prof. Chris Weedon weedoncm@cf.ac.uk

Your seminar tutor will provide you with his or her contact details during class. The email address for the Chair of the Cultural Criticism Board of Studies, Dr Carl Plasa, is:

plasa@cf.ac.uk

Appendix 1: Electronic Detection of Plagiarism

Cardiff University is committed to helping students understand and identify ways in which plagiarism might occur and to helping students avoid the accidental plagiarism of any sources of information during their studies.

Each semester, a random selection of undergraduate coursework submitted for assessment will be tested for plagiarism. This will be done both manually (as is the current practice for all student assessments, and for which we do not need your permission) and electronically. The University is committed to the elimination of unfair practices, such as plagiarism, thereby protecting the standard of the degrees it awards.

The University uses an online service called Turnitin. This software searches the World Wide Web and extensive databases of reference material to identify duplication. The software makes no decisions about whether a student has plagiarised material; it simply highlights sections of text that have been found in other sources. In most cases this will be text that has been correctly cited. Work submitted to Turnitin will be stored electronically in a database or databases used for the study and may be compared against work submitted by students within this University or from other institutions taking part in this exercise. It will, therefore, be necessary to make electronic copies of your materials for transmission, storage and comparison purposes; at some point we might move to asking you to submit essays electronically, but for the moment we will scan the essays that we select for scrutiny.

You have rights under EU Data Protection legislation and the 1998 Data Protection Act. Our involvement in this testing exercise is intended to protect your interests as a student (it would be unfair if someone gained an advantage over you as a result of cheating), but we recognize that some students might feel very uneasy about this form of electronic surveillance of their work. If you wish to be excluded from any sampling or inspection exercise, you must email the Head of School (encap@cardiff.ac.uk), stating that you wish to be excluded from any programme or system of electronic surveillance of your work.

We wish to stress as strongly as possible that our participation in this scheme should not in any way be a cause of concern for the vast majority of students. The intention is to identify the very small number of students who resort to unfair practices. Unless we hear from you to the contrary, your readiness to cooperate with this exercise will be assumed; that is to say, you have given us permission to inspect your work electronically. A random selection of work will be scrutinized, but where we suspect plagiarism to be evident in a piece of work, that piece of work, and possibly other work by the same student will be submitted for scrutiny, if we feel it is appropriate.

Frequently Asked Questions about Turnitin

What is Turnitin® UK (A JISC Service)?

The service helps academic staff address a number of common but difficult to identify issues related to citation and collaboration in coursework assessments. It enables tutors to identify the original source of material included within student work by searching a database of several billion pages of reference material gathered from professional publications, student essay websites and other student works. It is used by academics as a tool to help them provide better information and feedback to students about the work they have submitted. The tool does not make decisions about the intention of unoriginal work, nor does it determine if unoriginal content is incorrectly cited or indeed plagiarised. It simply highlights sections of text that have been found in other sources to help academic staff members make these decisions. In many cases this will lead the academic member of staff to provide feedback to students on how to improve their coursework submissions and citations. All assessment decisions will continue to be made by the course tutor who will review the entire work.

What is the benefit of using the service?

Your institution wishes to encourage students to behave with honesty and integrity at all times. The correct citation of work and the authenticity of submitted work is a cornerstone, not just of our education system, but of the trust and value held in each of our education institutions by employers and the public at large. The use of this service along with other methods of maintaining the integrity of the academic process will help your institution maintain academic standards and assessment fairness.

How will my data be used?

Material that has been uploaded will be stored electronically in a database and compared against work submitted from this or any other department(s) within this institution or from other UK institutions using the service. Your tutor will receive an Originality Report from the service. In most cases this feedback will be used by the tutor to instruct you about the process of citation and the importance of maintaining academic standards. In some cases, dependent on extent, level and context, the institution *may* decide to undertake further investigation which could ultimately lead to disciplinary actions, should instances of plagiarism be detected. Such decisions are entirely at the discretion of your institution and in no way involve HEFCE (the Higher Education Funding Council for England) nor the service. In this circumstance it is possible that your personal data may need to be disclosed to academic staff within the other institution(s) from where matching content has been submitted.

HEFCE has overall responsibility for the processing of personal data carried out by Turnitin® UK (A JISC Service). HEFCE and each institution signing up to use the service will together act as Joint Data Controllers for the personal data submitted with students' work. In order for your institution to make use of the service it will be necessary for personal data relating to you to be transferred to countries not governed by EU Data Protection legislation. However, it should be noted that *iParadigms*, the company processing your data, are bound by terms of contract to abide at all times by the Data Protection Act 1998.

How long will the service keep my work?

The service will seek to retain content submitted to it and associated personal data until the termination of this service or its successor, thus helping to accumulate as large a corpus of knowledge as possible against which to compare submitted content.

Who owns the copyright to the work I have submitted?

HEFCE has no interest in acquiring the intellectual property rights for the content submitted by you. The copyright for such content will continue to reside with either yourself or your institution; whichever is currently the case. The service will help to protect your work from future plagiarism and thereby help maintain the integrity of any qualification you receive.

What are my rights under the Data Protection Act?

As the data subject you do have the right to see what personal information is held about you in relation to this or any other service that stores your personal information and have limited rights to object to your data being used. Please refer to the Plagiarism Advisory Service web site (www.jiscpas.ac.uk) for further information regarding these rights. If your personal data has been integrated into the service via your institution's student information system your request may require the institution to withdraw your personal information from student information system as well. Your institution will be able to inform you of the implications of exercising this right under these conditions. Please note: your tutor can submit your work to the service without the use of personal data should you decide to exercise this right. The right to objection relates to the storage of your personal data and does not extend as a right to object to your tutor making use of technology aimed at improving academic standards when assessing your work.

Appendix 2: Policies and Regulations

About the Cardiff School of English, Communication and Philosophy

Cultural Criticism is part of the Cardiff School of English, Communication and Philosophy, which is located on floors 1, 2, 3 and 5 of the Humanities Building.

The degree programmes in the School are managed by the various Boards of Studies which consist of the staff who teach on the degree, plus student representatives. Boards of Studies report to the Teaching, Learning, Quality Committee.

Each Board of Studies has a Staff Student Panel. Student members of the Panel sit on the Boards of Studies and on other School committees.

All staff involved in assessing work are members of the degree programme Examination Board, which also includes external examiners, but not, of course, students.

The main administrative part of the School is located on the second floor. There are also offices which support your degree programme situated as follows:

- English Language and Communication: 5th Floor
- Cultural Criticism and Critical and Cultural Theory: 2nd Floor
- English Literature: 2nd Floor
- Philosophy: 1st Floor

You will find the offices of most staff teaching on these programmes on the same floor.

Board of studies

The degree scheme in Cultural Criticism is run by the Board of Studies in Cultural Criticism, on which students are also represented.

For examination purposes, the Board of Studies reconstitutes itself (minus the student representatives) as the Examining Board for Cultural Criticism. The Board of Studies is chaired by Dr Carl Plasa, and the Examining Board is chaired by Dr Radhika Mohanram.

➤ See also **Student Representation**, below.

Data protection

Under the rules of the Data Protection Act 1998, a student may opt not to have his or her results publicly displayed. In such cases, decisions of the Examining Board will be issued (on the same day that marks are displayed) either by a private face-to-face disclosure (but not by telephone), or in a private written communication, which will be sent to an address specified by the student. Any student wishing to exercise this right should notify the Chair of the Examining Board, Dr Radhika Mohanram (mohanramr1@cf.ac.uk), in writing.

Degree classifications and exam board conventions

Single Honours

Degree classifications are based on a final percentage calculated from the 240 credits in Years 2 and 3. The marks are added up and an average for Year Two and an average for Year Three produced. The two averages are then added together and a final average out of 100 produced: averages of 0.5 are rounded up.

- To gain a 1st, a student must have either an overall average mark of 70% or higher, **or** an overall average mark of 68% or higher *and* 120 or more credits with 1st class marks.
- To gain a 2:1, a student must have either an overall average mark of 60% or higher, **or** an overall average mark of 58% or higher *and* 120 or more credits with 2:1 marks.
- To gain a 2:2, a student must have either an overall average mark of 50% or higher, **or** an overall average mark of 48% or higher *and* 120 or more credits with 2:2 marks.
- To gain a 3rd, a student must have either an overall average mark of 40% or higher, **or** an overall average of 40% or higher *and* 340 or more credits.
- To gain a pass degree a student must have an overall average mark of 40% or higher. but only have 320 credits.

Examining Boards are only empowered to exercise discretion beyond the above in cases of Extenuating Circumstances.

Joint Honours

Degree classifications for Joint Honours students are worked out in exactly the same way as for Single Honours except that each subject counts for exactly 50% of the final overall average.

Four-Year Degrees

Degree classification for Joint Honours reading for degree with a modern language are worked out in exactly the same way as for Single Honours, except each subject counts for exactly 50% of the final overall average and that each student is awarded an extra 120 credits for the Year Abroad.

Dignity at work and study

The University is committed to supporting, developing and promoting equality and diversity in all of its practices and activities. The University aims to establish an inclusive culture free from discrimination and based upon the values of dignity, courtesy and respect. The University recognises the right of every person to be treated in accordance with these values.

The aims of the University policy are to:

- promote a positive University environment in which people are treated fairly and with respect

- encourage all university staff and students to play a role in creating and maintaining an environment in which harassment, bullying and victimisation are understood to be unacceptable forms of behaviour
- provide a framework of support for University staff and students who feel that they have been the subject of harassment, bullying or victimisation
- ensure that allegations of harassment, bullying or victimisation are addressed fairly, with respect for the rights and dignity of all those involved

For further information, visit:

www.cf.ac.uk/cocom/equalityanddiversity/dignityatwork

Disability and specific learning needs

All members of the School are encouraged to pay particular attention to issues of equality, diversity and access in relation to both students and staff. The School seeks to raise awareness, to review existing provision, and to ensure good practice. It is committed to implementing University policy on Disability and to keeping its policies and procedures under regular review.

The University seeks to provide an accessible environment and encourages anyone who has specific requirements that arise as a result of a disability to contact the Disability and Dyslexia Service in order that appropriate arrangements can be made. Their contact details are as follows:

Address: Student Support Centre, 50 Park Place, Cardiff

Tel: 029 2087 4528

Email: dyslexia@cf.ac.uk or disability@cf.ac.uk

Web: www.cf.ac.uk/dyslX

The disability team have a general responsibility for the co-ordination of admission arrangements and post-entry support. They can advise and offer practical help and assistance on matters such as the disabled students' allowance, general finance, car parking, accommodation, setting up care packages, equipment, study support needs, examinations and so forth. They are available during office hours. Appointments are not always necessary.

The dyslexia service provides a range of confidential services for dyslexic students and students who think they may be dyslexic. These include advice on applying for grants and examination concessions, and individual help with study skills, language skills and computer use.

Individual assessments can also be arranged if the Head of the Dyslexia Resource Centre recommends an assessment is necessary. Students do not have to pay for assessments.

Disclosure

Students are given a number of opportunities to make the University aware of their needs and will have been invited to fill in a Disclosure form sent to them after they have received their offer of a place at Cardiff. This should enable the University to

make any reasonable adjustments you may need to help you have an enjoyable and successful time here.

You can fill in or update this form at any time and choose who is allowed access to the information you give. Requests to limit access will be respected, although this may mean that it affects the scope of adjustments that we are able to make.

For more information on Disclosure, ask the Disability and Dyslexia Service.

Equal opportunities and diversity

The School is very much aware of equal opportunities issues for both students and staff. It seeks to ensure good practice, to raise awareness and to consider existing provision. It takes seriously the need to implement the University policy on Equal Opportunities and Diversity, and to keep under review all its policies and procedures in the light of policy.

Harassment

Harassment consists of behaviour towards another which causes, or which might reasonably be expected to cause, sufficient distress or annoyance seriously to disrupt the work or substantially to reduce the quality of life of that person, by such means as bullying, verbally or physically abusing, ill-treating, or otherwise creating or maintaining a hostile environment for that person.

An extra problem is that harassment, by its nature, often takes place in circumstances where there are no witnesses. There are various courses of action open to anyone who believes that they are being harassed.

If possible, the recipient should state clearly to the harasser that the behaviour is unacceptable and should cease. If this first rebuff is insufficient, the complainant is likely to benefit from the support of a third party. It is useful to make a note of the time, place, and nature of any specific incident.

For further guidance, contact the Student Advisory Service:

Address: 50 Park Place, Cardiff

Telephone: 029 2087 4844

Email: studentadvisory@cf.ac.uk

Web: www.cf.ac.uk/advice

Joint honours students

The University provides information specifically for Joint Honours students on the following webpage:

www.cf.ac.uk/regis/sfs/joinhonours

Personal development planning

Personal Development Planning (PDP) is a process which aims to improve your ability to understand what and how you are learning, and to review, plan and take responsibility for your own learning. It will help you to get the most out of your student experience by helping you to take responsibility for your development and by raising your awareness of the variety of opportunities for development.

To begin, log in to Blackboard at <http://cue.cf.ac.uk>.

Why should you do PDP?

PDP helps make the transition to University life easier

It prompts you to think about how you learn, helping you to reflect upon your own achievements and plan for future academic and personal development. Some students find it difficult to adapt to the new ways of teaching and learning expected by University-level education. You may be daunted by the variety of module choice available, or be unsure about how to manage your time for study, or you may be confused as to how to improve your work from a 2:2 to a 2:1 standard.

Gain more than just a degree

Employers are not only interested in the academic subject that candidates study but are also looking for evidence of the development of a wide variety of transferable skills and competencies. Many of the skills that employers look for can be developed through your course, but there are also opportunities to develop transferable skills and qualities via participation in extra-curricular activities such as membership of clubs and societies, part-time employment, voluntary work. It is important that you use your time at University to develop the skills and experience that are essential in an increasingly competitive graduate job market.

Stand out from the crowd

With more students than ever starting university each year, a degree qualification alone is no longer a guarantee of securing employment or guaranteeing a place or funding for further study. Whilst a degree from Cardiff University will impress employers, they are increasingly looking for graduates who can demonstrate an 'added extra', and this usually translates as the ability to articulate and demonstrate the skills you have acquired.

PDP will help you to prove and document your personal and professional development and to develop the confidence and ability to articulate your skills and qualities to a wide range of employers and other professional bodies.

How can you record the outcomes of PDP?

An on-line resource, designed to guide you through the process of PDP and help you construct an electronic record of your development, is available to all students. This is hosted in Blackboard. As well as providing a framework to help you plan and record your personal development, this resource will provide you with information on how you can integrate extra-curricula experiences into your PDP process.

For more information, ask your Personal Tutor or visit:

<http://tinyurl.com/yu9atb>

Progression regulations

For Humanities and Social Studies progression regulations, please consult the following website:

<http://tinyurl.com/5m5o3p>

For the University's regulations for modular undergraduate programmes of study, please see the following Word document:

<http://tinyurl.com/3esvpf>

For the University's progress regulations, please see the following Word document:

<http://tinyurl.com/4bpz4m>

Research ethics

School policy is to promote the understanding and debate of the ethical dimensions of research, be it at staff, postgraduate or undergraduate level, and to ensure that particular research initiatives are carefully and formally scrutinised and that ethical approval for them is granted or withheld.

An Ethical Approval form will need to be completed by all students involved in relevant sorts of empirical research involving contact with human 'subjects' or informants or similar projects. The completion of the document will be a precondition of beginning the student's research project.

Further details of the School ethics policy and procedures for research can be obtained from the Academic Administrator (room 2.63, Humanities Building; email: encap-ac@cf.ac.uk).

Student representation

Problems that may arise over courses and the general running of the programme can be raised by your representatives at meetings of the Board of Studies in Cultural Criticism or at the Cultural Criticism Staff-Student Panel.

The Panel is made up of the nine elected students, a representative of the Year One tutors, the Chair and Secretary of the Board of Studies and one other full-time member of academic staff.

You will be asked to elect representatives from your year to the Staff-Student Panel and to the Board of Studies. Each year is represented by three students on the Staff-Student Panel, which, in turn, elects the year representative on the Board of Studies. The Panel also elects a student representative for the ENCAP Equal Opportunities Committee.

Problems which may arise over courses and the general running of the programme can be raised at meetings of this Panel, which reports to the Board of Studies. It is consulted on all proposed major changes to the degree scheme, on ways of obtaining feedback from students, and on the design and content of Student Handbooks and

the Module Catalogue. Most of all, it allows for dialogue between representatives of the students and of the teaching staff. The panel is chaired by one of the student representatives. You should find out from the notice-board by the Cultural Criticism office who your representatives are and ask them to raise specific issues at the Panel or the Board. Elections (by year) are held in October.

Appendix 3: Extenuating Circumstances

What constitutes Extenuating Circumstances?

If you know of any circumstances likely to affect or to have affected your work adversely - for example, illness, injury, close bereavement, or other serious personal problems - please make sure that you let us know. You should contact your Personal Tutor or the Examinations Tutor or the section office as soon as possible. Wherever possible, your report should include documentary support, such as, for example, a medical certificate.

What you should do

Collect and fill in the Extenuating Circumstances Form (ECF) from the office. When you fill in the form you must include ALL the information you are asked for.

➤ A copy of the form is included below.

If circumstances affect your submission of coursework/essays

If you feel that your performance may be affected by your circumstances, fill in the Extenuating Circumstances Form and take it or, if circumstances prevent you from doing so, send it and the relevant documentation to your Personal Tutor or to the section office.

Extensions

If you believe that your circumstances will prevent you from submitting your coursework in time, you will need to make arrangements well before the deadline. Take or, if circumstances prevent you from doing so, send the ECF form, which includes a coursework extension form, and a medical note, or other official letter or document that supports your case to the Examinations Tutor, Dr Radhika Mohanram (mohanramr1@cf.ac.uk), during her Office Hours. If the circumstances warrant it, s/he will agree a new deadline. Extensions are given usually for no more than one week.

N.B. Working in paid employment, computing problems, printer breakdown, file corruption, misplacing notes, books or essay drafts do not constitute valid reasons for an extension or for late submission.

If circumstances seem likely to affect your attendance at or performance in one or more examinations

Again, if you feel that your performance may be affected by your circumstances, fill in the Extenuating Circumstances Form and take it or, if circumstances prevent you from doing so, send it and the relevant documentation to your Personal Tutor or to the section office.

If you have to be absent from an examination on medical or compassionate grounds (such as close bereavement, but not for reasons of financial hardship), you must submit the Extenuating Circumstances Form with relevant documentary evidence to

the Examinations Tutor, who will make alternative arrangements for you, usually to sit the examination at a later date.

If you are absent from an examination but the Board is not satisfied that there are reasonable medical or compassionate grounds, you will be awarded a mark of zero for the examination.

Arranging an 'Alternative Venue' for examinations

If you think that you will need extra time in examinations (e.g., long term disability or a temporary problem e.g. a broken wrist, or, if not previously notified, dyslexia), you must submit an official request to the Chair of the Exam Board. You should do this as soon as you are aware you will need special arrangements. The Academic Registry will send you information about Specific arrangements for your Alternative Venue once your request has been processed.

The Examination Board's procedure for Extenuating Circumstances

All Examination Boards have an Extenuating Circumstances Committee which meets before the Internal Examination Boards to consider all documented Extenuating Circumstances cases in conjunction with provisional marks. This committee makes recommendations to the Examining Board who may make adjustments to marks as appropriate. As with all other discussions held during the Examination Board, these recommendations are confidential.

Sample extenuating circumstances form

Cardiff School of English, Communication and Philosophy
(ENCAP)

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES FORM (ECF)

Form to be completed by undergraduate or postgraduate taught students

Students who believe that their performance in assessments or examinations has been significantly affected by personal extenuating circumstances should advise the examiners about the particular circumstances and the impact on performance. To do this, students should complete this form, ensuring that it is submitted to the appropriate office or (for Joint Honours students) offices.

Student Name:	
Student Number:	
Year of Study:	
Degree Scheme:	
Personal Tutor:	
Contact phone number:	
Contact address:	
List of Modules Affected:	

I am requesting that my extenuating circumstances be taken into account by the Exam Board

OR

I am requesting a revised submission date for a piece of coursework (give reasons below)

My extenuating circumstances are (*continue on other side of this sheet if necessary, or attach a letter*):

Form continues overleaf

My extenuating circumstances are (*continued ...*)

Please give the period of time you have been affected by these circumstances (*these should be confirmed in the supporting documentation*):

From:

To:

I am submitting the following documentation to support my request for extenuating circumstances to be taken into account (*please supply and attach securely to this form, e.g. letter from doctor, student counsellor, Personal Tutor*):

DECLARATION

I declare that the information given above is factually correct and may be disclosed to members of the Extenuating Circumstances Committee.

Signed:

Date:

Revised submission date:

Approved

Date

Notes about the Extenuating Circumstances Form

1. It is your responsibility to report any significant personal circumstances that, in your opinion, had a substantial impact on your performance in assessment or examination.
2. In accordance with University procedures, an Extenuating Circumstances Committee will consider the form and documentary support. This is a small sub-group of the Board of Examiners. No personal details – only summary recommendations – will be disclosed to the wider Board of Examiners.
3. If you demonstrate a strong case, it is possible that the Board of Examiners may exercise its discretion (e.g. to award you a higher classification if you are borderline, or permit you to proceed notwithstanding poor performance). Even if discretion is applied, there is no guarantee that your overall result will be affected.
4. Do not list all modules that you have studied – only those that you feel were adversely affected. Be precise about what assessments were affected – e.g. 2nd essay, exam, test.
5. You must be specific about, e.g. the unforeseen and unavoidable personal circumstances that significantly affected your performance. Be precise about how your work was affected – e.g. lack of time to complete the work, missed X hours in the library, unable to revise, etc. The more detail you provide to indicate the severity and impact of the circumstances, the greater will be the information available to assist the Committee in considering your case. You may use additional sheets of paper if necessary. If the circumstances are particularly sensitive, exceptionally, it may be appropriate to submit the form in a sealed envelope, marked as 'strictly confidential' and 'for the attention of the Chair of the Board of Examiners only'. You must indicate how long the problems lasted.
6. You are advised to provide documentary support about the problems and the period of impact – e.g. doctor's notes, a statement of support from your tutor, etc. It is recognised that this is not always possible, but you need to be aware that your case is more likely to be considered as 'strong' if documentary support is available.
7. In most cases, students will be expected to have informed their personal tutor (or other member of academic staff) that they are making a submission to the Committee, but you do not have to do this if you would rather that staff did not know details of the circumstances. It is your responsibility to ensure that the form is submitted to the appropriate office as soon as possible.

Appendix 4: Specimen Essay Questions

These specimen questions are **for information only**. Do not answer them! They are intended to give you an idea of the kinds of questions on which you will be assessed.

Postmodernity I

Answer question ONE, and ONE other question. Refer in detail to the course readings and specific cultural objects/texts where appropriate.

1. Choose a cultural object that you would identify as postmodern. Analyse it in detail to bring out, in the light of this semester's work, those features that lead you to characterise the object as postmodern.
2. Discuss the ways in which two different pieces of music can be described as postmodern.
3. How does postmodernity change the ways in which art is produced and received? Be sure to draw on specific examples in your answer.
4. According to bell hooks, *Pulp Fiction* 'titillate[s] with subversive possibility ... but then everything kinda comes right back to normal'. Do you agree with her proposition? Your answer should include a consideration of the film's relationship to postmodernity.
5. Could *Written on the Body's* subject be characterized as postmodern? Answer with reference to the novel's content and form.

Postmodernity II

Answer question ONE, and ONE other question. Refer in detail to the course readings and specific cultural objects/texts where appropriate.

1. Is a postmodern identity possible?
2. National identities involve narratives; these can be realist or postmodern. Discuss.
3. What would be important in a postmodern approach to race? Discuss in your answer both Richard Dyer's essay 'The Matter of Whiteness' and at least one relevant cultural text of your choice.
4. What is it possible to know for certain about the past in postmodernity? Answer with reference to specific examples of texts or objects from the past, and/or accounts of past events.
5. How does trauma destabilise the borders of identity?

If you need a copy of this document in large type or on cream paper, please contact Jean Verrier in the Cultural Criticism Office, Room 2.21, Humanities Building.

Any suggested changes or additions to future editions of this Handbook should be sent to: YearOneCC@cf.ac.uk