

Creative Writing BA (Hons) reading list and advice for new students

General advice

There is only one set book for Creative Writing students in year 1: the Strand and Boland anthology highlighted in bold below. However you will be asked to do set reading tasks from time to time. However the books listed here may give you some ideas to trigger writing before you start the course. Look at them to see which you think you will find helpful as different approaches benefit different students.

In addition, when you start the course you may be asked what creative writing you have read recently for pleasure. Look for poetry, fiction and creative non-fiction that you would not otherwise read and use it to expand your sense of what writers can do. In addition, return to favourite writers and start reading them for craft. For prose writers, look at the strategies they use to create tension, convey character and place, write dialogue, etc. For poetry read the work aloud so that you can listen to its effects – and when you have put a poem aside, see if there is any line or phrase that you can remember a few hours later. For the moment, please focus on printed work.

Exploring Creative Writing (CREW1000)

T. Bailey (ed) *On Writing Short Stories* (OUP, 2000)
Julia Bell and Paul Magrs, *The Creative Writing Coursebook* (Macmillan, 2001)
Anne Bernays & Pamela Painter *What If? Writing Exercises for Fiction Writers* (Harper Collins, 1990)
Steve Gooch, *Writing a Play* (A & C Black, 2004)
Maxine Hairston and Michael Keene, *Successful Writing* (Norton, 2003)
C Black, 1997)
Sara Maitland, *The Writer's Way* (Arcturus, 2005)
Nicola Morgan, *Write to be Published* (Snowbooks, 2011)
David Morley, *The Cambridge Introduction to Creative Writing* (Cambridge University Press, 2007)
Philip D. Roberts, *How Poetry Works* (1986)
Peter Sansom, *Writing Poems* (Bloodaxe, 1994)
Jerome Stern, *Making Shapely Fiction* (Norton, 1991)
ed. Mark Strand and Eavan Boland *The Making of a Poem: a Norton Anthology of Poetic Forms* (New York: Norton, 2001) – SET TEXT

and these are recommended for

Writing and Identity (CREW 1001)

N. Goldberg, *Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within*. Boston: Shambala Press, 1986.

R. Wolf, *Jump Start: How to Write from Everyday Life*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001.

But it's a good idea just to read and write as much as possible.

Further Advice

Try keeping a journal or a blog (use www.blogger.com) and make the resolution to write a certain amount - even if it's only a couple of hundred words or a haiku - every day.

Make time at least once a week to look at what you have written and assess it critically. Then edit it, thinking about why you are making particular changes. Be prepared to spend more time editing and rewriting than you spent writing.

Read books and poems and magazines and anything you find. Try to write in a range of different styles based on what you have been reading.

Look at poetry and fiction magazines to see what advice they offer.

Note: The above reading list are subject to change.