

EN930 SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT:
Variations on a Theme: Gothic Adaptations, Appropriations, and Transformations

For **week 6 of term 2**, students should submit a **6,000 word essay** that examines either an adaptation, appropriation, or transformation, of:

Any one of the **primary texts** we have covered on the course:

- ❖ *Frankenstein*
- ❖ *Northanger Abbey*
- ❖ “The Flying Dutchman”
- ❖ *Sweeney Todd*
- ❖ Any of the short stories from week 6
- ❖ *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*
- ❖ *The Blood of the Vampire*
- ❖ *The War of the Worlds*
- ❖ *The Turn of the Screw*

And/or may use one of the following **themes covered on the course**:

- ❖ Parody/Satire
- ❖ Anatomy/Disease/Medical Sciences
- ❖ Nautical Gothic
- ❖ Staging the Gothic
- ❖ Penny Bloods and Serial Fiction
- ❖ Urban Horror
- ❖ Female Gothic
- ❖ Queer Gothic
- ❖ Short Fiction
- ❖ Invasion/Colonial or Apocalyptic Gothic
- ❖ Gothic creatures.

Permitted forms of adaptation/appropriation/transformation:

- ❖ Novels/Novellas, Poetry
- ❖ Short stories, flash fiction, sketches, serials etc
- ❖ Stage, radio plays, podcast (you must have access to an official copy of the script or provide a transcription as an appendix)
- ❖ Movable books (pop-ups, lift-the-flaps, 3D)
- ❖ Digital and interactive books
- ❖ Illustrated adaptations/Graphic Novels/Comics (these must feature some text/dialogue)
- ❖ Translations
- ❖ **Note:** For the purposes of this particular essay, **film/television adaptations are not permitted**, but this could be an option for your dissertations ...

- ❖ If you use a primary text you may also think of that as an adaptation/transformation of something that came **before**.
- ❖ The adaptation/appropriation/transformation **may come from any time period**.

Choosing and Agreeing your essay topic

Choosing a topic for your essay is extremely important. Early planning is vital and will help you pace work throughout the year. **You must have sent me an outline of your proposed topic and title, and agreed this with me, by Friday of Week 11.**

For this assessment, a sense of **originality is key**. So, try and avoid obvious couplings that have been covered many times, such as *The Blood of the Vampire* and *Dracula*.

EXAMPLES (not exhaustive, just for a sense of options) which you may use if you wish:

1. Using *Frankenstein* as your core text, you may choose to look at how contemporary children's science books use Shelley's novel and the Gothic to help children understand the ethics of anatomy dissection. Or examine it alongside another novel from any period about **medicalised Gothic** such as H.G. Wells' *The Island of Dr Moreau* (1896), or a direct contemporary adaptation and translation such as Stefan Brijs' *The Angel Maker* (2005).
2. Alternately, you might use *Frankenstein* as your core text, and look at a direct **parody** such as [*Frankenstein According to Spike Milligan*](#).
3. You might think of *The War of the Worlds* (1898) as a **later appropriation** of the "End of the World", apocalyptic Gothic theme found in texts such as Mary Shelley's *The Last Man* (1826).
4. You might look at other versions of the "Phantom Ship" tale in any form. Or you might have seen a **staged adaptation** of one of our texts by a local/national theatre company. Contact them for a copy of the script and analyse their adaptation. Or you might examine the **staging, song lyrics, and script** for Stephen Sondheim's musical adaptation of *Sweeney Todd* against the book,
5. Alternately, you might examine the **original** French story *Sweeney Todd* is said to have been inspired by.
6. You might choose to examine the **historical context** of Penny Bloods and Penny Dreadfuls against other Gothic serial, and cheap forms. For instance, taking the line that such fictions were thought to corrupt the mind, how does the content and reception of **contemporary series** such as *Point Horror* or **horror podcasts** compare?
7. Using a couple of the short stories from week 6, you might think about how the spaces depicted resonate with earlier or later examples of **female Gothic** such as Ann Radcliffe's novels, or Shirley Jackson's oeuvre.
8. You might have come across an online interactive text adaptation of one of the books and wish to discuss the impact of **digital humanities**.
9. You might want to consider a **"Queer" reimagining** of one of the texts or the time period, such as Sarah Waters is famous for, or an adaptation that considers the text from an **alternative/minor character's point of view** as Jean Rhys' novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) does for Bertha Mason of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847).
10. **You might think about how illustrated** children's literature, graphic novels, comics, or illustrated adult editions use the relationship between the visual and the textual to reimagine one of the primary texts.

GUIDELINES

Please see the main departmental page for the **cover sheet** for your essay, information on **how to submit** your assessment, and the MA handbook with further guidelines.

<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/currentstudents/pg/masters>

- Essays are double-marked.
- Students will normally receive feedback from the first marker and the agreed final mark.
- All marks awarded by examiners are provisional, until confirmed by the Exam Board in November.
- Comments will be returned via Tabula, the University's online submission system.
- Students may wish to ask their tutor to discuss feedback with them (please do!).
- Markers have twenty working days from the original submission deadline to return feedback and marks to students.
- Essay word lengths are **6,000 words** (you may go 600 words over or under – a 10-% discretion) to be submitted in **week 6 of Term 2**. The word lengths are inclusive of quotations and footnotes but not of bibliography.

In marking, examiners will reward cogency of argument, the use of appropriate material, stylistic excellence and good presentation – for this assessment **originality counts too**.

Essay Writing Assistance

The University offers several sources of support for home and international MA students who are looking for help with academic writing, and specific support is available for international students seeking to improve their English-language facility.

- [The Academic Writing Programme](#) - Masters academic writing is the first step into research writing. Your writing should be able to demonstrate not only your ability to analyse, critically engage with material and develop complex arguments, but also aspects of originality. Visit the website to see all the courses available and pick the ones that suit you best.
- [The Masters Skills Programme](#) offers academic writing workshops alongside a range of events and online resources.
- International students can take advantage of the [in-sessional English-language classes offered by the Centre for Applied Linguistics \(CAL\)](#).
- [The Language Centre](#) provides language-learning opportunities for undergraduate and postgraduate students, University staff, and members of the public. There are several ways you can learn languages with the Centre. You can take a language as part of your degree, as an extra course of study, through a language proficiency test or by taking a shorter summer course.

Submission

The deadline for submission is **week 6 of Term 2**.

You will be submitting your coursework via the online “[coursework management](#)” system Tabula. You can find information on getting started with Tabula on the IT Services website here: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/its/servicessupport/web/tabula/guides/student/>

Assignments must be prefaced with a completed cover sheet available [here](#)

Marking criteria

The pass mark for the MA in English is 50, with a Merit being marked at 60 or more and a Distinction being marked at 70 or more.

Marking descriptors are as follows:

80+ (Distinction): Work which, over and above possessing all the qualities of the 70-79 mark range, indicates a fruitful new approach to the material studied, represents an advance in scholarship or is judged by the examiners to be of a standard publishable in a peer-reviewed publication.

70-79 (Distinction): Methodologically sophisticated, intelligently argued, with some evidence of genuine originality in analysis or approach. Impressive command of the critical / historiographical/theoretical field, and an ability to situate the topic within it, and to modify or challenge received interpretations where appropriate. Excellent deployment of a substantial body of primary material/texts to advance the argument. Well structured, very well written, with proper referencing and extensive bibliography.

60-69 (Merit): Well organised and effectively argued, analytical in approach, showing a sound grasp of the critical/historiographical/theoretical field. Demonstrates an ability to draw upon a fairly substantial body of primary material, and to relate this in an illuminating way to the issues under discussion. Generally well written, with a clear sequence of arguments, and satisfactory referencing and bibliography.

50-59 (Pass): A lower level of attainment than work marked in the range 60-69, but demonstrating some awareness of the general critical/historiographical/theoretical field. Mainly descriptive or narrative, rather than analytical, in approach. An overall grasp of the subject matter, with, perhaps, a few areas of confusion or gaps in factual or conceptual understanding of the material. Demonstrates an ability to draw upon a reasonable range of primary material, and relate it accurately to the issues under discussion. Clearly written, with adequate referencing and bibliography.

40-49 (Fail/Diploma): This work is inadequate for an MA award, but may be acceptable for a Postgraduate Diploma. Significant elements of confusion in the framing and execution of the response to the question. Simple, coherent and solid answers, but mainly descriptive or narrative in approach. Relevant, but not extensive deployment of primary material in relation to the issues under discussion. Occasional tendency to derivativeness either by paraphrase or direct quotation of secondary sources. Some attempt to meet requirements for referencing and bibliography.

39-(Fail): Work inadequate for an MA or Diploma award. Poorly argued, written and presented. Conceptual confusion throughout, and demonstrates no knowledge of the critical/historiographical/theoretical field. Failure to address the issues raised by the question, derivative, very insubstantial or very poor or limited deployment of primary material.

Plagiarism and academic misconduct

The departmental guidelines on plagiarism outlined here are governed by the university's regulations on cheating in a university test (Reg. 11B), to which students are referred:

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/calendar/section2/regulations/cheating/>

Plagiarism is passing off someone else's academic or creative work as your own. This can be a matter of direct transcription, without acknowledgement, of passages, sentences and even phrases from someone else's writing, whether published or not. But it also refers to the presentation as your own of material from a printed or other source with only a few changes in wording. There is of course a grey area where making use of secondary material comes close to copying it, but the problem can usually be avoided by acknowledging that a certain writer holds similar views, and by writing your essay without the book or transcription from it open before you. When you are using another person's words you **must** put them in quotation marks and give a precise source. When you are using another person's ideas you must give a footnote reference to the precise source.

All quotations from secondary sources **must** be acknowledged every time they occur. It is not enough to include the work from which they are taken in the bibliography at the end of the essay, and such inclusion will not be accepted as a defence should plagiarism be alleged. Whenever you write an essay that counts towards university examinations, you will be asked to sign an undertaking that the work it contains is your own.

Self-plagiarism involves the re-submission of academic or creative work which has previously been submitted by the student for assessment in another module and/or for credit at another institution. Auto-plagiarism involves a failure to acknowledge use of excerpts from your own, older work in new, original work. **You should not use the same material in more than one piece of work nor write at length on the same text or topic in more than one essay.** Where this rule is not observed, examiners will disregard the repeated material, and mark the essay or dissertation only on the basis of the new material. This may result in a fail mark for the essay or dissertation.

The University regards plagiarism as a serious offence. A tutor who finds plagiarism in an essay will report the matter to the Head of Department. The Head may, after hearing the case, impose a penalty of a nil mark for the essay in question. The matter may go to a Senate disciplinary committee which has power to exact more severe penalties. If plagiarism is detected in one essay, other essays by the student concerned will be examined very carefully for evidence of the same offence.

In practice, some cases of plagiarism arise from poor scholarly practice. There is nothing wrong with using other people's ideas. Indeed, citing other people's work shows that you have researched your topic and have used their thinking to help formulate your own argument. The important thing is to know what is yours and what is not and to communicate this clearly to the reader. Good scholarly practice involves intellectual discipline and acknowledging one's debt to other thinkers and practitioners.

Extension Requests

In some circumstances, such as illness or other hardships, it is possible for students to apply for an extension to the essay deadline.

- **You MUST apply for extensions via the Coursework Management section of Tabula.**
- **You will also need to send an email to PGEnglish@warwick.ac.uk, copying in the Convenor of your MA. Please state the nature of the circumstance and supply appropriate documentation, such as a medical note.** This must be an original note signed by a medical doctor or equivalent. The department treats all medical notes and other sensitive material in confidence.
- **You must apply for an extension in advance of the deadline.** Requests for extensions after the deadline has passed will only be considered where the circumstances are grave and unforeseeable. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the and the Convenor of your MA programme.

Policy on late submission

Work which is late without permission will be penalised by 3 marks per day.

Policy on over or under-length assessed work

All assessed work must conform to the stated word lengths. The word lengths are inclusive of quotations and footnotes but not of bibliography. You will be asked to provide a word count of your essays on the cover sheet which you complete when the work is submitted. We allow a penalty-free margin of up to 10% over or under-length. Essays that are 10-25% over or under-length will incur a penalty of 3 marks. Essays that are more than 25% over or under-length will be refused and a mark of nil will be recorded.

Information on **Failure and Resubmission, Mitigating Circumstances, Board of Examiners, Appeals, and Failure and Resubmission** can be found in the [Module Handbook](#)